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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI ACCORDS

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

ONE HUNDREDTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

MAY 29, 1987
PHILADELPHIA, PA

Printed for the use of the
Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

[CSCE 100-1-17]



U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON : 1988

81-940

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Congressional Sales Office
U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402

5891-4

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PUBLIC HEARING ON RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

FRIDAY, MAY 29, 1987

COMMISSION ON SECURITY AND
COOPERATION IN EUROPE,
Philadelphia, PA.

The Commission met, pursuant to notice, in the Friends Meeting House, 326 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA, at 9:30 a.m., Representative Steny H. Hoyer (chairman) presiding.

In attendance: Commissioner and Representative Christopher H. Smith with a senior Member of Congress, Representative James J. Florio.

Also in attendance: Mary Sue Hafner, deputy staff director and general counsel; Jane S. Fisher, senior staff consultant; and Jesse Jacobs, staff assistant.

OPENING STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN HOYER

Chairman HOYER. Ladies and gentlemen, my name is Steny Hoyer and I'm Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

I want to take this opportunity to introduce one of the members of the Commission who is with us from the State of New Jersey. To my right, a member of the Republican Party, elected in 1980, and one of those who has been, as a member of the Commission, most in the forefront of the issue with which we deal today, Congressman Chris Smith.

To my left, also from the State of New Jersey, one of the senior Members of the Congress now, Chairman of one of the major subcommittees of the Energy and Commerce Committee, one of the most important committees in the Congress of the United States, and a gentleman who was the Democratic Party's nominee for Governor of the State of New Jersey some few years ago. Although he is not a member of the Commission itself, he is one of the most active spokesman on behalf of human rights that we have in the Congress of the United States and we're very pleased that Congressman Florio could join us.

I'm going to recognize each one of them for an opening statement in just a minute.

It is, perhaps, fitting to ask why the Helsinki Commission is examining religious intolerance in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union at a hearing here in Philadelphia. For an answer to that, I look back to what began 200 years ago this week. In the long, hot summer of 1787, 55 of America's most eminent citizens closeted themselves inside Independence Hall, only to emerge nearly 4

months later with the most remarkable governing document in history, the United States Constitution.

To the framers of the Constitution, individual liberties were a primary concern, so they created a government built around a separation of powers that would guard against tyranny and guarantee the rights of individuals.

They recognized, however, that their document was not complete and they agreed, as a consideration for the adoption of that document, that they would, in fact, adopt additional provisions. We know those additional provisions, of course, as the Bill of Rights.

The first amendment deals with the issue of this hearing, that is of the relationship between the state and religion and the relationship between the state and the individual's right to practice, as his or her conscience dictates, the religion of their choice.

Today, we focus on that right, the right to practice religion freely. The norm 200 years ago, and sadly for many still today, late into the 20th century, was not religious freedom, but rather sectarian strife fueled by government favoritism.

Recognizing this and wanting to avoid it, the framers set forth a system of safeguards to protect not only religious freedom but all freedom. Government would promote no particular religion, nor would it interfere in religious life. But instead, it would tolerate all religions. This was like no other system at the time. It was new and truly revolutionary. But the writers of our Constitution knew that no American would be free if his or her conscience remained in chains.

As George Washington said:

Every man, being accountable to God alone for his religious opinions, ought to be protected in worshipping the deity according to the dictates of his own conscience.

While we are still debating where to place the wall that separates church and state, there is one thing our courts and legislatures have made clear, government has no business deciding the rights and wrongs of religious belief. Unfortunately, as we all know, this is not the case for our brothers and sisters living in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and, indeed, in other places of the world.

Our focus, as a Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, is on the Helsinki Final Act and, therefore, on those 35 nations who signed that act. The Helsinki Final Act raised the promise to citizens of those 35 signatory nations that the signatories, the signing nations, would accord that freedom of conscience of which George Washington spoke.

Indeed, a first reading of the Soviet and East European Constitutions might lead one to think that religious freedom is guaranteed in these nations. All seem to grant religious rights, especially the right to worship. But these nations do not have an independent judiciary to determine whether a law violates a basic right. They do not have a system of checks and balances. Freedom, religious freedom, is at the pleasure of the authorities, as I'm sure some of our witnesses will attest.

Thus, the Constitution of these nations, though appealing on the surface, offer little protection for religious liberty. And while it varies from nation to nation, believers in Eastern Europe and the

Soviet Union must put up with an endless maze of decrees and restrictions that literally define religious life.

This, in our opinion, is nothing less than a violation of the Helsinki accords. In the Soviet Union, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, you can be part of legally recognized denominations, but you must abide by strict regulations that circumscribe your rights. You are allowed to worship, but only in designated places with state approved church leaders. Prayer meetings, in many instances, are not allowed, indeed in most instances are not allowed. Religious education is tightly controlled or prohibited.

But your situation is even worse if you are not a part of a legally recognized denomination or if you choose not to abide by the rules of the state. What you face is a religious catch 22. You have no house of worship and cannot meet at home. So any act of faith is illegal in many instances. And, of course, if you are too much of a religious activist, as we will have witnesses testify to, you become a threat to the authorities and a target for repression.

If you are a Ukrainian Catholic, your religion is outlawed in the Soviet Union. Jehovah's Witnesses share the same fate, and in Romania and East Germany as well.

The bottom line is that authorities perceive religion as a threat to their legitimacy. Under such conditions, even where church and state accommodate one another, there can be no religious freedom as we know it.

I hope, and the Commission members hope, that future generations that come to Philadelphia to celebrate civil liberties and religious freedoms will have a different story to tell. As the spirit of the Helsinki accords make clear, freedom and respect for human rights are a universal goal.

The Commission has been charged with the responsibility of pressing for the human rights, articulated and committed to, in the Helsinki Final Act. We are here in Philadelphia to receive testimony from those who know so well the practice, as opposed to the promise, in Eastern Europe.

We appreciate the presence of our witness and I very much appreciate the presence of Congressman Smith and Congressman Florio.

Let me now recognize a member of the Commission, Congressman Smith, for the purposes of making some opening comments.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

Representative SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and welcome to my good friend and colleague Mr. Florio and ladies and gentlemen.

Mr. Chairman, Principle VII of the Helsinki Final Act declares that the—

Participating States will respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion of belief.

I believe that these are the most private individual and liberating freedoms of all the objectives that are set forth in the 1975 accords and that faithful observance of these freedoms profoundly affects all of the people of the 35 signatory nations.

Human rights, Mr. Chairman, certainly transcend geographical and political borders. Human rights are fundamental and I believe

that the protection of those rights is the clearest indication possible of the humaneness, the compassion and the sensitivity of any particular government.

Mr. Chairman, as you have noted, as we gather in this City of Brotherly Love, especially during this year in which our country celebrates the 200th birth of the Constitution, we are reminded of the many freedoms which the early settlers and the founding fathers held so dear, among which were the freedoms of religion and assembly.

I believe religious tolerance refers not only to the individual liberty to worship without prejudice, without harassment, without civil or criminal penalties being levied upon the believer, but believers should also be free to assemble peaceably, to worship together at the place of their choice.

I was vividly reminded that this is simply not the case in Eastern Europe, Mr. Chairman, when on Tuesday of this week, I had the opportunity to meet in my Washington office with Vladimir Jonku, Director of Church Affairs in Czechoslovakia. The meeting was quite cordial and polite, as most diplomatic exchanges are, but I did ask a number of pointed and tough questions and raised several individual cases of religious persecution.

During the course of the conversation, I raised the matter of individuals being restricted by law, by policy, from meeting privately in homes to study their Bibles or to have religious observances. Regrettably, Mr. Jonku and his government fear allowing this basic freedom of assembly and are strangely intimidated by the notion of believers exercising their freedom to serve God in any way outside of the church building.

While the Communist regimes have the power to enforce these violations of human rights, I believe to do so is a clear sign of insecurity and is clearly a sign of weakness.

As many of my colleagues know, I've been very active in the congressional debates and battles and initiatives relative to several Eastern bloc countries, including the Socialist Republic of Romania and its violations of human rights. Indeed, I believe many of our colleagues in Congress share this concern as indicated by the broad bipartisan vote on April 30 to temporarily suspend most-favored-nation status for Romania.

It seems increasingly clear to me, Mr. Chairman, that Congress has been wearied by the string of broken promises by the Ceausescu regime. The time has come to require Romania to live up to its promises with deeds.

Mr. Chairman, I'd like to commend this outstanding panel of witnesses that have been assembled here today. As you know, they represent a diverse cross section of nationalities and religious beliefs. Looking to my right, I see Dr. Gordon, from CREED. Dr. Gordon and I go back a number of years and I know having read his book, "The Miracle on the River Kwai," and his great work on behalf of those who are persecuted behind the Iron Curtain, I look forward to his testimony, today.

A very special welcome to Father Calciu, clearly a spiritual giant who has been imprisoned for adhering to his faith. Father Calciu is a living example of the extremes to which the Romanian Government has gone to restrict the religious freedoms of its people.

Having openly opposed atheism and the demolition of various churches by the Government, Father Calciu never lost faith throughout his 21 years in prison.

Father Calciu has endured beatings, deprivation of food and water, solitary confinement, painful separation from his wife and son and other forms of torture because of his unswerving commitment to Christ, the Gospel and the highest moral principles.

When I was in Romania in 1985, leading a delegation of members on a privately funded trip, we requested that we meet with Father Calciu and we were turned down flatly by the authorities. We were happy, though, when Father Calciu was released and made his way to the United States.

Finally, just let me say, Mr. Chairman, that the evidence makes it overwhelmingly clear that throughout the Eastern bloc and the Soviet Union, governments continue to restrict or cleverly circumscribe the church and the freedoms of believers. In virtually all East bloc countries, severe limits are placed on the number of believers who are allowed to attend to the small number of seminaries that do exist and licenses of ministers continue to be arbitrarily revoked.

The case of Yon Keller, a Czech Brethren Evangelical priest, comes to mind. Father Keller was detained for obstructing state supervision over churches and religious societies. He has been without a license since January 1984 and faces a very uncertain future in Czechoslovakia.

Similarly, Mr. Chairman, Father Vlakov Maly, a young Roman Catholic priest in Czechoslovakia, had his state license revoked because he signed Charter 77, a splendid Czech human rights document. Along with the Chairman of this Commission, I met with Father Maly in Prague earlier this year and was deeply impressed by his abiding faith in God, his deep concern for youth and his commitment of the promotion of human rights. Father Maly, indeed, is an inspiration.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward to hearing the testimony of our distinguished guests, who know first-hand the severe limits that have been placed on believers throughout the Eastern bloc and in the Soviet Union.

Mr. Chairman, we hold this hearing today to further the U.S. commitment to helping those who suffer daily behind the Iron Curtain. I think the gist of the hearing can be summed up by something that Father Calciu said upon his arrival in this country back in August 1985. He said:

It is hard for us to eat our daily bread in peace and to rejoice in the quietude of our home as long as millions of oppressed peoples who trust in God and believe in His power and generosity continue to suffer, calling for help.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Congressman Smith.

I'd now like to introduce Congressman Jim Florio. Congressman Florio had the opportunity to travel to the Soviet Union last year and so brings with us to this hearing a first-hand recent knowledge of the Soviet Union.

Congressman Florio.

STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JAMES J. FLORIO FROM NEW JERSEY

Representative FLORIO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and to my friend, Chris Smith, my friend and member of the Commission.

In the interest of conserving the Commission's time, I have a full statement that I request be put into the record in its entirety.

Chairman HOYER. Without objection.

Representative Florio.

[The following is the written statement of Representative James Florio.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF REPRESENTATIVE JAMES J. FLORIO FROM NEW JERSEY

I would like to thank Chairman Hoyer and the members of the Helsinki Commission for arranging this field hearing in Philadelphia and focusing attention on religious persecution and intolerance in the Soviet Union and in Eastern Europe. It is only fitting that we gather in Philadelphia today, as the City of Brotherly Love celebrates the 200th anniversary of the Constitution.

It is only fitting that we, who are citizens of a nation which is governed by a document that guarantees us the freedom to practice our religious beliefs and fulfill our destinies, call attention to the many who are restricted these freedoms in their own countries.

Last year, I traveled to the Soviet Union on behalf of the Soviet Jewry movement. It was indeed a memorable trip and I value every opportunity to share my impressions and my firm conviction that the need remains strong for continuing to call attention to the plight of Soviet Jewry.

I traveled with six constituents, members of the Jewish Federation and the Jewish Community Relations Council of South Jersey, on behalf of the effort to assist Soviet Jewish refuseniks.

Refuseniks, as you know, are those who seek to exercise the human rights guaranteed by international accord, including the freedom of speech, the freedom of religion, the freedom of political thought and expression, and the freedom of movement and emigration. They are refused the right to emigrate and seek lands where freedom is not such a rare commodity and thereby call down upon themselves the full force and might of an oppressive system the likes of which we cannot imagine.

A traveler in the 1930's once said about the Soviet Union that, "What one knows before one goes to Russia is not worth knowing. In Russia, one learns a new truth a minute." Although I have long been involved in efforts on behalf of Soviet Jewry, although I have read about life in the Soviet Union, and was fully briefed by people that had taken similar trips before, I was unprepared for the deprivation and the bleakness of daily life there. I was struck by the courage and perseverance that is demonstrated daily by Soviet refuseniks and by all those who seek to uphold their rights.

My mission had two major goals. The first was to gain information and witness first-hand the abuse, the deprivation, the harassment and the constant surveillance that have become a part of the lives of refuseniks.

The second was to offer encouragement to those who wait and to let them know that, though their voices and their pleas go unheard by the Soviet authorities, there are many in the West who listen and who are concerned.

The most poignant part of my mission included meetings with individuals and families that have expressed the wish to emigrate but have been repeatedly refused and subjected to harassment. Their lives include a series of well-orchestrated abuses timed to intimidate and repress. An application to emigrate immediately triggers the loss of jobs, pervasive surveillance, harassment which becomes commonplace, false criminal charges, trials of a sort and imprisonment.

All of these abuses of the legal system we revere in this country are too frequent and deprivation and abuse are the norm. Without having experienced such a trip, it is almost impossible to comprehend the stealth and secrecy that this group must resort to in order to meet and worship according to their religion.

The majority of the refuseniks I met with were highly educated professionals, ranging from mathematicians to engineers, who had undergone harassment and loss of jobs. Their crime was that they dared to go against the system and request to leave.

Harassment begins at an early age with children such as 8-year-old Naomi Shapiro being refused admission to school because of their parents' status. If you happen to be Jewish, you are given grades in school based on your loyalty to the Soviet system and not your performance.

I met Eugene Gilbo, a former entrance examiner, who reported being told to give failing grades to exams submitted by Jewish applicants at the Leningrad Polytechnic Institute. When he refused, his two academic degrees were stripped.

Whether you are healthy or sick, young or elderly, makes no difference in this Soviet game with the lives of Soviet Jews. Instead, they undergo painful treatments and unnecessary operations in an effort to prolong life. The Soviet authorities are deaf to their pleas and blind to the many letters sent on their behalf from doctors and clinics around the world.

One of the pleas voiced by the refuseniks I met with was the hope that we will continue to draw international attention to the plight of Soviet Jewry by writing letters, appealing to government leaders, "adopting" refuseniks, and ensuring that this issue is dealt with in the context of U.S.-Soviet relations.

We have today before us a group of witnesses who will testify about their experiences of religious intolerance in not only the Soviet Union and the Ukraine, but also a number of Eastern bloc countries, including Romania, Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Our Constitution guarantees us certain inalienable freedoms which cannot be restricted by governments and directives. However, we must remember that millions of people live in countries whose governments make religious persecution the norm. It is therefore vital that we continue to call attention to these instances in the hope that international pressure will bring about change.

I believe that all who know will care about this situation and hopefully assist in lifting the national and international level of awareness to this indefensible state of affairs.

I look forward to listening to the testimony of the witnesses.

Thank you.

Representative FLORIO. And let me just summarize by way of some preliminary remarks. I'm pleased that the Commission has seen fit to come here to look into the topic of religious persecution in the Soviet Union and the Eastern bloc, in violation of the Helsinki accords.

It's certainly something that's very significant to us. The symbolism of having it here in Philadelphia at this particular time has been commented on by both of the previous members. Certainly it's appropriate and, I think, it is an opportunity for all of us to focus on the uniqueness of our system and the hope that we can see more of the fundamental principles that we have incorporated into our system that allows for an opportunity for all to exercise those human rights that we refer to as inalienable, those given to us by virtue of being born across the world.

Congressman Hoyer made reference to my trip to Russia last July, a truly traumatic experience for me, an educational experience. The trip was put together by a local organization, the Jewish Federation of South Jersey. I went with six of my constituents. We went primarily to look at the situation with regard to refuseniks.

I think of myself as a reasonably well-read person. I was fully briefed before the hearing. But, quite frankly, I was not prepared for what it is that I saw when I went there. The bleakness, the deprivation of life is something that most Americans can't fully appreciate.

We had a situation there, in meeting with the refuseniks, of getting some sense of what happens when these individuals choose to exercise their human rights, the human rights of religion, assembly, and the right to emigrate from their nation. And, of course, when they exercise that right, they call down upon themselves the

full oppressive force of a system, the likes of which we cannot even begin to understand.

I think it's important for all of us to take the message that I took out of the Soviet Union. That is, that the oppression that individuals face when they attempt to exercise their religion, to use but one example, is not going to be in any way addressed unless the public and world opinion is aware of these difficulties.

It seems to me that that is our mission and it's part of the mission of the Commission, to elevate the international sense of awareness as to what it is that's going on and thereby hope to be able to focus the spotlight of public attention on these types of activities, so as to be able to induce change. Not change that's going to take place immediately. Not change that's going to take place even quickly, but change that will take place and change that will inevitably result in good things because the human spirit will not tolerate indefinitely oppression.

The human spirit will not tolerate indefinitely the restrictions that have superficially and artificially attempted to be imposed upon human beings.

So, I would just say that this Commission and this hearing and all the other activities that they have become involved with is part of that long-term plan, that game plan that I think all of us, as God's creatures, feel the need to be involved with, of attempting to relieve the situation that requires people to be out of step with natural law, natural law providing us with those rights that are ours. Not rights that can be given to us by government, and therefore taken away, but those rights that are ours by virtue of being born.

So, Mr. Chairman, I commend you and I look forward to participating in the Commission's hearings this morning and look forward to the witnesses' testimony.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Congressman Florio, not only for your attendance here and your participation, but also for your very cogent and compelling statement.

We have a number of excellent witnesses. We're going to call on them one by one. Sometimes we do a panel, but I want to call on you one by one, if I may. We're going to go in alphabetical order so that we have made no distinction as to importance. All of you are very important. Going by alphabetical order sort of extricates you from making a judgment, you can just do it by the numbers. So, that's the system we will use.

First of all, I'd like to ask Father Gheorghe Calciu, a Romanian Orthodox priest, of whom Mr. Smith talked earlier to come forward. We had the opportunity of meeting with him in Washington as well when he was released. He is the Director of Faith and Liberty Institute in Washington, DC. He was born in 1925 and was imprisoned for 16 years by the Romanian Communist government for opposing the teaching of atheism in public schools.

Father Calciu taught theology at the Romanian Orthodox Seminary in Bucharest and he became a popular religious figure through a series of sermons addressed to youth.

Because of his great following, he was fired from his university teaching position and the doors of his church were closed. Yet he continued to talk from the front steps of his church.

On March 10, 1979, Father Calciu was arrested, along with several activists in Romania's free trade union. The following July, he was tried and given a 10-year sentence for what the Romanian Government asserts were, "neo-fascist activities." No charges were ever presented nor any evidence presented to substantiate the state's case.

The apparent reason for Father Calciu's arrest and imprisonment was that he was a potential rallying point for a broad range of human rights activities in Romania.

Thankfully, on August 20, 1985, he was released after 5½ years of imprisonment; during which he was repeatedly beaten and threatened with death. He engaged in a series of protest hunger strikes and performed Mass in contravention of prison regulations.

Following his release from prison, Father Calciu and his family lived under house arrest in their Bucharest apartment. Under pressure from the government of the West and international Christian organizations, he was permitted to emigrate to the United States in 1985.

One of the privileges of being a member of this Commission and participating in the hearings of this Commission is you have the opportunity of meeting and hearing from some extraordinarily courageous spokespersons for human rights.

We, in the United States, like to believe that we speak up on behalf of human rights. Thankfully, we live in a country where speaking up does not take a toll, does not subject us to imprisonment. We are, I think, therefore, perhaps at times not so aware of the cost of speaking up that some others know. And Father Calciu is one of those.

Father, if you would take a seat. We want to thank you for being with us.

Father CALCIU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

STATEMENT OF FATHER GHEORGHE CALCIU, A ROMANIAN ORTHODOX PRIEST

Father CALCIU. When I left my country, I promised to my Christian people not to eat in peace my daily bread and not to drink in peace my daily water as long as my people are persecuted and the church destroyed and also God is not allowed in my country.

For this, I am engaged in this fight here in America. But I think we have to have a larger view about the persecution which is very different and take many aspects in the East and in the West.

Dear brothers and friends, the essence of communism is not the socialization of private property. Such ideas are older than socialism. But atheism is a religion with their god, whether that matters, with its prophets, Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin. There's a mistake of that matter, the fanatic religion of atheism, the violent persecution of all other religions, the total interdictions, an interdiction of freedom of conscience.

Last year, being in England, I spoke about religious persecution in my country for the boys and girls of an American high school from Inverness. After the conference, the English teachers of the

school told me that one of them was fired having the courage to speak to the children about Jesus Christ.

But one can freely speak of communism and the atheism. Isn't it another kind of persecution? All over the world where communism is established, religion is forbidden, the church is destroyed, believers put in prison. And I'm not talking only about Christianity. No other philosophy, if not materialistic, no freedom of Christians, no worshipping, if not Marxism, is allowed.

Let us have a look in America. If in the schools, somebody dares to speak of Jesus, he's immediately fired. But there is no interdiction for he who fights religion, who preach communism and atheism, organize their public actions, slander the American politics and economy.

Where is the equality in front of the laws? The Communists have the right to influence the fragile souls of the children, but the believers, Christians, don't. So, we should not be astonished if the American youth has such tragic experiences before they find their way, if they do, after years of suffering and despair.

The most active supporters of the interdiction of religious education in the American schools are the Communists from the Kremlin, Bucharest, Prague, et cetera.

But, we ask to have the same rights the Communists have regarding the education of the children. When Constantine the Great gave the Edict of Milano in 313, there was no special favor for the Christians, but just equality with pagans.

We ask the same rights for the believers, to stop teaching our children to become intolerant, rather, to respect the religion, philosophy, culture and language of their classmates, not to oppress their faith.

The religious persecution in Communist countries is so atrocious and takes so many forms, that it needs large studies to denounce it to the free world. In my country, Romania, you find the most terrorist regime from all the European Communist countries. The people have no religious rights. The administration of Ceausescu admits only 14 confessions. Any other religion or confession is illegal and their members can be arrested and sentenced, eventually killed, just because of their faith, not because of some perpetrations against the laws of the state.

The Uniate Church, for instance; which existed in Romania since 1700, was forbidden in 1948. All the bishops were put in prison and died there in concentration camps. Ninety percent of the priests had the same lot. Since then, for 40 years, the church and its members are living underground and are worshipping God in the catacombs.

The Lord's Army, a movement of popular evangelization, is in the same situation for 40 years. Tens of thousands of its members died in prisons. Its spiritual leader was arrested many times, spent more than 16 years in prison. Last time he was sentenced in 1982 for having published clandestine religious poems. Today, he is living under a strong surveillance of the secret police.

Why do the Christian poems have to be published clandestinely, while the Communist propaganda is free in all the Western countries? In Galatz; a group of Christians, members of the Lord's Army, gathered in one of the homes to pray and to read the Bible.

The police rushed in and fined them 70,000 lei. The salary of a worker reached 1,700 lei a month.

I was sentenced to 10 years by a special order of Ceausescu, for seven sermons addressed to the Romanian youth, urging them to Jesus. Only in Bucharest, 14 of the churches, some of them Protestant and a synagogue, were bulldozed, the last being at Doamna Oltea, Bucharest, in December 1986.

Twenty thousand Bibles were turned into toilet paper by Ceausescu's regime. We made a great demonstration, May 15, 1987. People signed on toilet paper a protest against this profanation, but the Romanian Embassy refused to receive our delegation.

The priest, Gavilla Stephan, with his eight children, are persecuted in house arrest, in psychiatric clinics and starving. We sent them parcels with food, but never have gotten a confirmation that they received the parcels.

The novices from the monastery Varatic are continuously threatened to be expelled from the monastery by the Communist authorities.

Last year, I asked David Atkinson of England to pay a visit to the family of Ile Neamtu, from Romania, a member of the Church of the Gospel, who was in prison. The Secretariat did not allow it.

Reverend Gavril Cernautean was sentenced to 4 years because of his fight for the rejuvenation of the Christian Church.

Powell Negutz, leader of the Baptist Church from Oradea Pavel, is continuously harassed by the Secretariat for his courage in preaching the Word of God, while Talpos, the president of the union, the Baptist Union, sent by the Communist regime in America to make propaganda for Ceausescu, declared that the demolition of the church is a blessing.

Baptist engineer David Talescu, 44, is now in prison for his faith. Canes Vasile, 60, is in prison sentenced to 6 years, having helped some Christians to cross the frontier, fleeing persecution.

Brothers and friends; such meetings like this today, give us the opportunity to tell the people the truth regarding violation of religious and human rights in the Communist countries. It is only a small part of what is happening in these countries. It would be too long to speak about those who are persecuted for political or philosophical ideas. Thank you for your interest in these problems.

We thank God for the opportunity he gave us to meet today, and we hope our conscience will be awakened and our souls with those in suffering. God bless the persecuted people and us.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much. Father, I'd like to ask you a couple of questions.

First of all, about the specific items that you mentioned.

The demolition of the churches. Congressman Smith, Congressman Wolf and I had the opportunity of meeting with about 9 or 10 leaders of various religious groups in Romania. Perhaps they'll be mentioned later. But in the discussion, for instance, about the demolition of the churches and the demolition of the synagogue, in particular, Rabbi Rosen—Do you know Rabbi Rosen?

Father CALCIU. I know him, yes.

Chairman HOYER. Rabbi Rosen indicated and I got the feeling that although he wasn't happy about that, that such demolition

was carried out as a result of an urban renewal project and that, in fact, everything around that area was demolished, but the synagogue itself was not singled out.

Can you comment on that in terms of the demolition of churches?

Father CALCIU. Some churches were destroyed or demolished because of urbanization, but it was not absolutely necessary that they be destroyed. They could be moved, but many of the churches are demolished not for any other reasons than just to be destroyed.

For instance, the last church was destroyed in December of last year. It was not necessary to be destroyed for urban renewal reasons. They destroyed it just to destroy a church. The church from the kingly palace, it was established in the court of the palace. Nevertheless, Ceausescu ordered it to be destroyed. We lost this church with no reason.

The first church was destroyed in 1979, and for which I protested and was put in prison. It was not necessary to be destroyed. They destroyed the church and built a restaurant there, no other thing. In the villages, churches were destroyed with no reason.

Chairman HOYER. Could you reiterate what church in December 1986 was destroyed which you indicate was not within an urban renewal area. What church was that?

Father CALCIU. It was D-O-A-M-N-A O-L-T-E-A.

Chairman HOYER. I don't know why I didn't get that right at first, but I'm glad you spelled it for me, Father.

Now, what denomination was that?

Father CALCIU. Orthodox.

Chairman HOYER. Orthodox?

Father CALCIU. Yes.

Chairman HOYER. So you have first-hand—

Father CALCIU. Yes. I met many people who built this church with their hands. You know? They were very, very depressed. It was the church built by them, not by the state, not by the help of other people. Very few of them from this area built this church 30 years ago. They were very, very angry.

Chairman HOYER. So it was built in the 1950's and destroyed—

Father CALCIU. The thirties.

Chairman HOYER. Oh, the thirties?

Father CALCIU. Yes, thirties.

Chairman HOYER. It was 50 years ago.

Father CALCIU. Yes.

Chairman HOYER. OK. Now, let me ask you about the 20,000 Bibles that you indicated were converted. As you know this has been an allegation that has been discussed on the floor of the Congress.

You indicate that there were 20,000 Bibles turned into toilet paper. Can you tell us for the record what personal information you have with respect to that, how you know it occurred?

Father CALCIU. When this happened, I was in prison. I heard about it when I came here to America. Christian Solidarity International produced some proof regarding this turning of Bibles into toilet paper.

But I can tell you that in prison, when I was in prison, we had no toilet paper. And instead of paper, we had sheets of Bibles in

the rest rooms of the prison, Bibles and other religious publications.

Chairman HOYER. In other words, obviously you could tell that they were torn out and just——

Father CALCIU. I know nothing about this, only what I have heard about——

Chairman HOYER. But in prison, you saw——

Father CALCIU. In prison we had sheets of Bibles.

Chairman HOYER. And you could tell it was torn pages of Bibles being used for toilet paper.

Father CALCIU. Right, for toilet paper, not turned into toilet paper, just pages of Bibles put for toilet paper.

Chairman HOYER. I understand.

Father CALCIU. And other religious publications.

Chairman HOYER. Now briefly, and then I want to turn to my colleagues for their questions, we met with a number of individuals and I will not pronounce their names very well I'm sure, but His Excellency Antonie Plamadeala——

Father CALCIU. Antonie Plamadeala, I know him.

Chairman HOYER. Exactly, that's what I wanted to say. Plamadeala, right, somewhere close to that, who is with the Orthodox Church. And they are the largest, they are 18 million.

Father CALCIU. Yes.

Chairman HOYER. We met with Father Ioan Robu.

Father CALCIU. Oh, yes. Archbishop of the Catholic Church in Romania.

Chairman HOYER. Yes, Catholic Church. Representing the Reformed Church was Mr. Gyula Nagy.

Father CALCIU. Yes.

Chairman HOYER. With the Evangelical Church, Mr. Pitters.

Father CALCIU. Yes.

Chairman HOYER. Rabbi Rosen, president of the Jewish Community of Bucharest.

Father CALCIU. Yes.

Chairman HOYER. Vasile Talpos, Secretary-General of the Romanian Baptist Union.

Father CALCIU. Baptist Church, yes.

Chairman HOYER. And Mr. Popa, who is the President of the Union of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

Father CALCIU. Adventist, yes.

Chairman HOYER. Now, do you know most of those individuals?

Father CALCIU. Yes.

Chairman HOYER. Have you had an opportunity of meeting with them, talking with them?

Father CALCIU. I had some talk with most of them, not all of them. I know them by—I saw them in party publications. But I know very well Antonie Plamadeala and Mihaitza, Nifon, Bishop Nifon. They were two people who came forward here.

Chairman HOYER. OK.

Father CALCIU. I know Popa. I know Rosen.

Chairman HOYER. Rabbi Rosen. Now, let me tell you why I asked that question. Congressman Smith was there with me. In our discussions with these representatives in Washington at which there

was a representative of the Romanian Embassy with them, their assertion was that they were able to freely practice their religion.

Now, I think they made it clear that this was a state that did not believe in religion officially and was atheistic in its policies, but nevertheless tolerated their religious activities. Now that is at odds with what you've just told us and what we believe to be the case.

I'd like your comments on that assertion. Why they would make that. Whether they're forced to make that. Whether you believe that, in effect, they are state spokespersons in that context.

Father CALCIU. I received an invitation issued by that Romanian Embassy—I want to read you that text. You know very well the text, but I want to read this for the public.

In honor of the religious leaders of several Romanian religious denominations, and on the occasion of the Romanian children's class visiting the United States for participation in the annual—of the Holocaust organized by the—Holocaust Council. The Ambassador of the Socialist Republic of Romania requests the pleasure of the company of Mr. Gheorghe Calciu at a buffet reception.

I asked myself why was it needed to bring 12 people representing seven confessions here in Washington for the buffet reception in their honor? In Romania, Ceausescu never invited these leaders to offer a reception. There are not religious reasons which determined this reception, only political reasons. They are not representative of the churches. They are the pals of Ceausescu and of his politics. They came here not for religious reasons. They came here to ask for more favorable relations. You know it very well.

So, it's a difference between the leaders of the churches who are representing their government, the Communist government, not the church. The true church is that which is suffering, who is worshipping God in secret, who lives underground in the catacombs, who suffer in the prisons, in the psychiatric clinics, are expelled from society like Father Stephan with his eight children, and so on.

We have to make the difference between the official church and the true church.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Father. And now I would like to recognize Congressman Smith.

REPRESENTATIVE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH FROM NEW JERSEY

Representative SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'll followup on that question. You know it seemed to me that it was quite coincidental that leaders from the various Romanian churches showed up on the day of the vote for suspension of MFN. On previous occasions, clergymen just happened to drop in my office immediately prior to MFN votes. I'm wondering if you can tell us, do these clergymen really have any choice? There's always two schools of thought, those who feel they've got to resist the tyranny of communism with everything that's within them and there are others who feel that some kind of accommodation is necessary for the good of their particular denomination.

If, for instance, Rabbi Rosen were to say to Bucharest, "No, I'm not going. I'm not going to go and argue for MFN," what would be the disposition of himself as well as those who might back him up on that?

Father CALCIU. I didn't understand the question. Please repeat.

Representative SMITH. OK. This happened just a few weeks ago. Immediately prior to the vote in the House of Representatives on most-favored-nation status, all of the clergy from Romania were meeting with Congressman Hoyer and Congressman Frank Wolf and I and other members of the Commission were also invited. The timing was incredible. It seems that in previous years, these kinds of visits have always occurred before the vote on MFN.

I guess the bottom line question is, if a Rabbi Rosen or a Bishop Robo or a Metropolitan Anthony were to say, "I'm not going over to the United States to argue for MFN," what would happen to them? Would they be removed from office? Do they feel that this is something that they have to do in order to continue?

Father CALCIU. I don't know exactly what will happen with that, but they are totally submitted to the Government. They never protested against the demolition of churches. They never protested against the arresting of the people.

When I was put in jail, when I was on trial, I saw on the judge's table, a big file with information given by Bishops Anthony and Nifon about all particular conversations I had with them. Communists want to compromise the leaders of the churches. They know very well that this file is there for history and later, the people will discover that leaders of the churches were betraying their faithful, their believers and their priests.

I think they are too engaged in this submission to the Government. They have no more courage. Anthony is engaged in securitate since 1956. Father Roman Braga, who is now in Pennsylvania, and in a monastery, was sentenced to 25 years of prison because he was denounced by Anthony. At the time he was not a hierarch. He was a simple monk, but he was also interrogated and under pressure, accepted to be an informer.

Representative SMITH. You'd be interested, and I say this for the record also, I had a lengthy meeting with Metropolitan Anthony a couple of years ago and we really got into the gist of the scriptures, the kind of responsibilities that living up to the scriptures entail. I asked him regarding your case, and since you are from the Romanian Orthodox Church, he is one of the highest bishops in the denomination; did he or any other hierarchial personality make any kind of representation on your behalf. He said that "you were charged with political charges and they just accepted that."

He said "whatever the prosecutor brought, they accepted." Even in our system, we always have a check and a balance that if the prosecutor brings charges, there is a defense, the presumption is innocent until proven guilty. His response was an insight for me as to his thinking and the thinking perhaps of some of the other clergymen.

You know, I do believe that a window into the soul of a government is how it treats its political prisoners or mistreats them, how it deals with religious dissidents, believers like yourself. I wonder if you tell us Father what your days were like during those 16 years under Communists and I know you spent an additional 5 under the Nazis. What were your days like? You know, the sleep deprivation. Would you describe your ordeal?

Father CALCIU. A day of prison, yes?

Representative SMITH. Yes.

Father CALCIU. At 5 o'clock, you have to awake from bed and then the bed was lifted on the wall. All day we have to stay, not to be—

Chairman HOYER. To stand?

Father CALCIU. Yes, to stand, all day to stand. And I received, for instance, for 4 months, I received my food only the third day. Two days without food, then the third day I received food. I had no heat, no bed and I had only my cloth, no shirt, no pants, underpants, nothing. It was in the winter and the window was a little opened and the cold penetrated my cell. I was very, very tortured by my guardians.

Chairman HOYER. By the guards?

Father CALCIU. Guard, yes, by the guards. I was assaulted and beaten. Even the colonel, the chief of the prison, came two times a week to insult and to punish me. I never was supported by anybody and when the attorney came to the prison, I asked him to put an end to this mistreatment, this torture, because the laws don't allow torture. They insulted me also—like the guards. There was no difference between the guards, the chief of administration of the prison and the attorneys. They all were executing the order of Ceausescu. I was tortured by the special order of Ceausescu.

He was very embarrassed because my case was very well known in the world and many official governments and Christian organizations were protesting for me. Ceausescu didn't want to set me free, but he had no courage to kill me. So, for killing me, he ordered the administration to introduce in my cell two sadistic criminals, asking them to kill me. They had nothing human in them. One of them had killed his own mother. They persecuted me for 3 weeks. I had no rights in the cell. If I had to eat, I had to ask their permission and if I had to go to for my physical needs, I had to ask their permission.

I had no right to speak in the cell, to tell them something. But I was praying all the time, night and day with tears in my eyes. And after 3 weeks, we were able to pray together. We knelt on the floor of the cell, united in the same praying, because Jesus operated the changing in their hearts, not my words. I haven't the right to speak with them, but I was praying and Jesus Christ made this changing in their heart.

Chairman HOYER. And they were purposely in the cell to abuse you and they became converted?

Father CALCIU. Yes, they were put in prison to kill me. Yes, they witnessed this to me, they told me they were there to kill me by order of the administration. I can give you the name if you need it?

Chairman HOYER. What are the names?

Father CALCIU. Mihai, M-I-H-A-I, is the first name. I-O-N-A-S-C-U, one of them, and the other was—let me remember—I-O-N—I don't remember the last name.

Chairman HOYER. That was the last name?

Father CALCIU. The first name.

Chairman HOYER. That's the first name?

Father CALCIU. Yes.

Representative SMITH. Just two final questions. You were speaking of the systematic discrimination, prejudice against young people who would like to study religion.

Father CALCIU. Yes. All the young people belong to the Young Communist Organization. It's absolutely obligatory.

Representative SMITH. What happens if they believe?

Father CALCIU. They have to be indoctrinated with communism and atheism. They have no right to go into the churches. They have to denounce if their parents or friends are anti-Communist or believers and so on. So, the families are obliged to teach their children to lie. If a teacher, for instance, asked them if the family, the father and mother are believers, the younger children are obliged to say no. They are taught by their families.

The lies became a part of life for the young people. They continue to lie, not only to defend the life of their parents, but to accede to some high position and so on. The soul of young people is corrupted by these continuous lies.

Representative SMITH. Father, do you support this effort underway in Congress to suspend MFN for 6 months?

Father CALCIU. Yes. Yes. We made this big demonstration especially for denying MFN. There were many people, from all over the States of America, who came to Washington and asked to stop MFN because the people have no advantage from this most-favored-nation status. If you regard the economical curve of Romania for 12 years, since Ceausescu received MFN, you will see that this curve is descending with a big split. People are starving, the lack of food, liberty, heat, and of electrical current is endemic in Romania.

Representative SMITH. I just would like to observe for the record that the clergy had said to us at this meeting is that there are no political prisoners in Romania. In a meeting that I had with Ion Pashepa, who used to be top security man for Ceausescu, he said to those of us who were at this meeting that in 1972, Ceausescu outlawed political prisoners and the message went out to all state security people in the whole apparatus to find some other pretense to arrest.

The real reason will be for political or religious crimes, but find some other reason to arrest them, some other allegations so it cannot be categorized a political prisoner.

Father CALCIU. It's true.

Representative SMITH. So, people will make that assertion to our Commission and elsewhere, and I've heard it made numerous times, that there are no political prisoners. They just arrest them for something else and they set them up.

Father CALCIU. Yes. If somebody, for instance, if this group of Christians who get together to worship God or look at a movie of Jesus' life, they are arrested for disturbing the public order. Those who introduced Bibles are sentenced for introducing merchandise into the country.

Representative SMITH. Black market?

Father CALCIU. Yes.

Representative SMITH. Contraband?

Chairman HOYER. In any event, they illegally brought Bibles in.

Father CALCIU. Yes, they bring Bibles into the country. They are arrested not for introducing Bibles, but because they make it illegal. If they did this thing about Bibles and if somebody's—

Chairman HOYER. Illegal importation.

Father CALCIU. Yes, and if somebody is preaching about Jesus Christ publicly, he's arrested as an anti-Communist. I was arrested because I supported the free trade union also. I was arrested because I made religious propaganda, I supported the free trade union and they accused me of being an agent of American imperialism.

Chairman HOYER. Congressman Florio?

Representative FLORIO. Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions. The questions that have been asked covered the areas that I wanted to.

I just want to thank Father for the forceful statement—the very helpful statement—in providing to the Commission the perspective that you offered. Thank you very much for not only the appearance, but also the willingness to share with us the experiences that help make the record that the Commission is trying to put together. So, thank you very much.

Father CALCIU. Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Father.

Father CALCIU. Thank you for this opportunity. It was very important for me to testify about the situation in Romania. I was much too long in prison and I understand exactly what it means for Christian people to be persecuted, not to have the right to worship God. Our hope is in the American people because the other countries are small and, for us, only America is the strong country who can help us.

Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Father.

Next, we're glad to have with us Rabbi Leonid Feldman, who is the first Soviet-born rabbi in the Conservative movement of American Judaism having been ordained on May 14, 1987.

Rabbi Feldman was a government employee in the Soviet Union who taught scientific atheism, a discipline which sought to prove to Soviet students that there is no God and that people who believe in Him are mentally ill.

A former refusenik, he received his M.S. in physics from Kishinev Institute of Education. He was director of the Russian Department for the Bureau of Jewish Education in Los Angeles prior to his studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

He is also a member of the national board of the Union of Councils for Soviet Jews, and we're very pleased, Rabbi, to have you with us, thank you very much.

STATEMENT OF RABBI LEONID FELDMAN

Rabbi FELDMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission, I'm honored to be part of this hearing. You are engaged in Holy work by trying to reduce human suffering in the world.

My name is Leonid Feldman. I spent most of my life in the city of Kishinev in the Soviet Union. I have been in the United States for the last 7 years. I now live in New York, where 2 weeks ago I was ordained as a Conservative rabbi.

Today's subject is religious intolerance. I must be honest, I did not experience it in the Soviet Union. I was not religious. I never

visited a synagogue. I did not observe any religious rituals. I never saw a Bible. I did not believe in God.

And yet, in early childhood I learned that I was not a first-class citizen in my own country. What I experienced was racism. The Soviet Union is not an intolerant country. It is racist. I found out that my skin had a different color at the age of seven.

A boy from my neighborhood called me a "zhid." I had no idea what he was saying, but I didn't like the way he said it. That night, I asked my father, "Dad, what did Wovka mean by zhid?" "This is not a good boy for you to play with," my father said. Only later did I learn that "zhid" meant filthy kike.

On my first day in school, each child was asked to introduce himself. Everyone gave his first name, his last name, and his nationality. I did not know my nationality, but since the few students before me were either Russian or Moldavian, I decided I must be Russian.

When my turn came, I stood up and said, "My name is Leonid Feldman and I am Russian." Our teacher, Maria Ivanovna, looked at me sternly through her thick glasses. "Feldman," she reproached me, "do not lie to your comrades. Tell us the truth." There was deep silence. Thirty-two pairs of eyes were piercing through me. My comrades were waiting for the confession. My voice began to tremble. "I'm not lying," I said, "of course I'm Russian, like everybody else."

But Maria Ivanovna insisted, "We know the truth, Feldman. Tell us your nationality." I started to cry, "I'm not lying. I don't know what you want me to say." "Leonid, you shouldn't hide this fact. You are a Jew." Slowly, I began to understand that Jewishness, whatever it was, was as impossible for me to hide as it is for a Black to hide his color. Soviet Jews and Blacks in South Africa have a lot in common.

I spent my entire childhood and youth trying to overcome my defect, my sin of being Jewish. But the label, Jew, was stamped on my identity card, and worse, in my very name.

My best friend in childhood was chess. I studied and played this ancient game day and night. Since it is objective and fair, I was hoping I could succeed in chess in spite of being Jewish. At the age of 12, I became the youth champion of my Republic, Moldavia.

As the Moldavian champion, I was supposed to be sent to Leningrad to the national competition. I'm sure you all realize what it means for a 12-year-old boy to be the champion of his state and to be sent to the national championship.

This was the most important event of my childhood. That was the olympics of my life. I couldn't eat, I couldn't sleep, every moment I spent in training. I wanted to be good. I was excited and proud.

Two weeks before the departure, I was summoned to the Moldavian Sports and Recreation Committee. It was the first time in my life I had ever entered an official government building. The bureaucrat didn't bother to look at me. He just said, "We're not sending you to Leningrad." I was stunned. "Why not? What have I done?" The official responded coldly, "I'm sure you understand. A Feldman cannot represent Moldavia."

I refused to understand. "Why," I cried, "I was born in Moldavia. I grew up here. This is my home, and I am proud to represent Moldavia. I am the champion, please give me a chance." Angrily the Government official shouted, "You're asking too many questions, Feldman. You may leave now."

People often ask me what made me so determined to leave the Soviet Union that I would even go on a hunger strike and risk my life. I must share with you a story about my nephew.

I lost both of my parents in early childhood. I have one sister. She is married and she has one son. My nephew was 4 years old when this story took place. One day my nephew came home from kindergarten, he was in a funny mood. He was reluctant to speak and finally he began to ask my sister the following question.

He said, "Mommy, are we Jewish?" "Why do you want to know?" my sister asked him. He said, "Mommy, I don't like Jews." "Why are you saying this? Who taught you to say these words?" "We saw a movie in school today. They showed us these children, poor hungry children. They hadn't done anything wrong, and then we saw the Jews. They were big, and angry, and ugly, and they had guns. They were beating them and they were killing them. When I grow up, mommy, I'll take a gun and I'll shoot all the Jews." These were the words of my nephew, speaking to my sister.

You may guess that at this point, my sister stopped him and told him, "No, that's not true." Perhaps my sister told him about the Ten Commandments that we, the Jews, introduced to this planet, one of which says, "Thou shalt not murder." Or maybe my sister told him about the Seder celebration, during which we spill a few drops from our winecups because we Jews are not allowed to rejoice at the suffering of other people, even our worst enemies. Or perhaps my sister told him about our dietary laws, the main goal of which is to make us sensitive to the suffering of the chicken we eat.

My sister sat there and cried. First of all, she had never heard of Kosher kashrut, or the Seder. Second, she was scared. What if her child went back to school the next day and told his teacher, "My mommy is saying that you're lying. Jews don't kill children." The response of the teacher would be obvious. "Well, we'll have to teach your mommy."

My sister didn't say a word to my nephew. That night, I could not fall asleep. I realized then that I had no right to remain in that country, to get married, to raise a family. What was I going to teach my children? The thought of my nephew hating Jews led me to my hunger strike, to my freedom, and eventually to my becoming a religious Jew.

Today, I am a free and happy man, living in the best country in the world. Eleven years ago, I was a teacher of scientific atheism, proving to Soviet children that there is no God and people who believe in Him are mentally sick. Today, I am a rabbi, teaching Americans about the importance of religion in this world.

Gentlemen, people like you saved my life. When I was on a hunger strike in a KGB prison, I was scared to death. I was sharing a small cell with 47 hardcore Russian criminals. There was one thing that kept me going. This was the knowledge that there were people in the free world who cared and who did not forget me.

I am an example of what your work is all about. There are no words to express my gratitude to you. Several years ago, I was forced to begin each day of my life with the same words, "Glory to the Communist Party, long live Lenin, the future of humanity is glorious Communist paradise." Now, I begin every day of my life by thanking God for America and democracy.

God bless you and God bless America. Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. I don't know that there are any questions that could follow up on that, but I'm going to ask some questions anyway.

I want to thank you for being with us and thank you for your statement.

Were you recruited to teach atheism?

Rabbi FELDMAN. There is a very sophisticated system of brainwashing in the Soviet Union. It will take me too long to explain, but basically in a few words, I was trained to be a physics teacher. Every science teacher in the Soviet Union is obligated to take an additional exam, government exam, to receive a license. I'm proud to say I'm probably the first rabbi in history who has a license, a government license, as an expert in scientific atheism.

So, as a physics teacher, I had another profession. I was trained how to prove to Soviet children, using scientific methods and using scientific facts, that it is ridiculous to believe in God and only mentally sick people believe in God.

Chairman HOYER. And all science teachers are given that kind of training?

Rabbi FELDMAN. That's right. Physics, chemistry, math and biology teachers all have that license.

Chairman HOYER. Now, what was your response, if it ever occurred, to a child in one of your classrooms who tried to argue that there was, in fact, a God and that scientific atheism is wrong, or did you ever have that experience?

Rabbi FELDMAN. This is a very American question. It is inconceivable to anybody who has lived there that this may happen. A Soviet child would never ask this question. At the age of eight, when I was eight, the first human being was sent into space. Yuri Alexeevich Gagarin was not an American astronaut, he was a good Soviet Communist.

When Gagarin returned to earth, there was a huge press conference in the Kremlin and all of us, millions of us, were watching on TV screens. Nobody went to work that day. There were no classes in school. The entire country stopped because we had to watch the interview, the press conference, with the first man who was up there. I will never forget it.

I loved Gagarin. He was my hero. He was the hero of my childhood and I will never forget the question. One of the journalists with a big microphone said, "Comrade Gagarin, you are the only one in the entire world who knows the truth. You have been up there. Tell us, did you find Him, did you see God?" I will never forget the smiling face of my hero who said, "Nope. I was looking for Him. He is not there. There is no God."

Now, to anybody in the free world, this may sound like a childish response, or ridiculous or stupid. It didn't sound childish to me, to my parents and to 260 million Soviet people. In fact, we took it

very seriously. I believe that April 12, 1961 changed human history. After that day, it became basically illegal in that country to believe in God. You must be crazy to believe in God after what Yuri Gagarin told you.

So, the question of a child standing up in a classroom and saying to me, "Excuse me, but maybe there is a God," is inconceivable. No child would ever ask this question. I suffered in my childhood from much more innocent questions.

I remember very well the first time I was kicked out of class was not for throwing paper at children or hitting anybody. I remember it very well. It was the first semester in my life in school. When the teacher walked in and said, "Well, children, we all know that we live in the best country in the world," and I was a very curious child, so I raised my hand and I said, "Excuse me, have you been to other countries?" The teacher said, "What do you mean?" I said; "Well, when you say 'the best,' do you not have to compare with others?" She said, "Feldman, go see the principal."

So, I went to the principal and the principal began to scream at me. He says, "You are a troublemaker. You'll be in trouble." That day, he called up my father. I was reprimanded by my father for him asking too many questions.

So, with all due respect, Congressman, I have to say this is a naive question. No Soviet child would ever think of asking such a question. No Soviet child ever asks his teacher, "How are you sure that this is the best country in the world," because his parents would probably end up in the Gulag for him asking that question.

I spent my last 7 years in America traveling around the country and trying to explain to American people that the Soviet Union is not another country. It is not another culture. It is not another economic system. It is another galaxy. It is impossible for a normal American citizen to come close to understanding the Soviet society.

Chairman HOYER. Congressman Smith?

Representative SMITH. Thank you, Rabbi, for your very strong statement as well as your very lucid answers to questions posed by the Chairman.

In talking about scientific atheism, one of the themes that runs through Solzhenitsyn's books is that the Soviets don't just not believe in God, but they are militantly atheistic. There's a hatred of God. And since you have the license to teach, could you shed some light on that mind-set?

Before you do, I, like my two colleagues, have been to the Soviet Union. One of the most appalling and disturbing things that I saw, other than the refuseniks and some of the other people of faith that we met there who were undergoing the daily burden for their beliefs, but we went to Kasin Cathedral, which has been turned into a museum on atheism, and I saw all of the religious symbols of the world turned right upside down.

Rabbi FELDMAN. That's right.

Representative SMITH. Islam, Christianity, Judaism, all of them. Maybe you can shed some additional light on that.

Rabbi FELDMAN. I was going to talk about this museum. I'm very happy that you visited that museum. I wish—I strongly recommend for every American visitor to visit that museum.

Let me start by answering your first question. I agree with Solzhenitsyn that this is not just a country of nonbelievers. It is probably the most aggressively anti-religious society that humanity ever had. The idea that there is something above the Communist Party goes so much against everything that that country stands for, that they cannot, conceivably allow religion and religious belief in the Soviet Union.

It is not a coincidence that there are many parallels between today's Soviet Union and Nazi Germany. Hitler said this in "Mein Kampf," "I hate the Ten Commandments. I want to destroy the Ten Commandments. Therefore, I must destroy the Jews." The Soviets may never say that openly, but implicitly this is what's going on. They cannot afford a Soviet citizen believing in something above Lenin. So, that's No. 1.

No. 2, it is probably the most sophisticated system. That's why it's not that simple. By the way, they don't hide this. The museum that you were mentioning before is called the State Museum of Religion and Atheism. That's the direct translation from the Russian.

Now, when I say to Americans that there is a museum in Lenin-grad called the State Museum of Religion and Atheism, they begin to laugh, but there is nothing funny about this. The Soviet Government spends a lot of money in making fun of religion and religious symbols.

By the way, there is no exhibit there on Judaism, since Judaism is not a religion, according to the Soviet Government. There is an exhibit called Zionism.

So, I remember visiting that museum. My friends, refuseniks, I remember Shcharansky said, "You must see that museum." So, I walked in and there is a big poster at the entrance that says, "Beware of Zionism, the enemy of peace and progress," and there is an arrow to the second floor. I went upstairs. I wanted to see what they show as symbols of Zionism. After all, what can you show, an Israeli flag?

Well, I was very excited. I had never seen an Israeli flag. So, I went upstairs hoping I would see a Zionist symbol. What did I find there? I found three items. I found a prayer book, a prayer shawl that religious Jews use in a synagogue, and a piece of matzo. A piece of matzo is the enemy of peace and progress. That's what they show to Soviet children.

They bring Soviet children from all over the country to prove to them. These are the methods and they're very sophisticated. So, religion and atheism always go together. It is the opia of the people.

So, I'm sure everybody in this room has read the recent exciting reports about the Soviet Government, Mr. Gorbachev and the new policy of glasnost. Isn't it wonderful? He's going to send six Soviet Jews to America to be trained as rabbis. Again, a lot of Americans are very excited about this. It made front pages of almost every Jewish newspaper in this country.

I'm very depressed by this news. This is very depressing. What Americans don't understand is that when you say "a rabbi" and when Gorbachev says "a rabbi," we're talking about two completely different things. We're talking about six young Jews from Lenin-grad, Moscow, and Kiev who will be trained as KGB agents with an additional title, "rabbi," to impress people like Billy Graham or

Congressmen who visit them. They will say, "Well, we have six rabbis in this country."

So, we have to remember that we are dealing with a completely different world here, different attitude to human life, to human dignity.

Representative SMITH. One final question, Mr. Chairman.

How extensive is the use of psychiatry against religious believers?

Rabbi FELDMAN. Well, thank God now we have probably the most knowledgeable expert in this field, Anatoly Koryagin, who spent most of his life in psychiatric hospitals, Dr. Koryagin, who himself is a psychiatrist, who was put in those prisons and camps because he spoke up against the use and abuse of psychiatry.

I must admit, I was not abused by psychiatry. My prison term was very short. I was threatened. I was put in a very small cell with real criminals who, had they known my last name, would have definitely murdered me, raped me or something like this. Luckily, at that time, because of the world pressure and public outcry in the West, the KGB decided not to kill me at that time by these criminals.

So, I was not abused in that area.

However, I'd like to use this opportunity to make one more statement. We have to sensitize ourselves that, again, when we say a psychologist or psychiatrist or a lawyer, we are forgetting that we're making a big mistake. I'm very depressed that next week there will be a meeting of the American Bar Association. And at that meeting there will be present some members of the Soviet so-called Bar Association.

And once again, because of the goodness of the American people, and because of lack of understanding of the nature of the Soviet society, lawyers in this country say, "Well, let's get together with our colleagues. Let's talk to each other." Then doctors in America say, "Let's meet with our colleagues."

The problem is, we're not dealing with "colleagues." Soviet lawyers were the ones who put me in jail. Soviet lawyers sent Andrei Sakharov, one of the most beautiful human beings of the 20th century, to exile. Soviet lawyers kicked out Solzhenitsyn of that country. Soviet lawyers rape and abuse Jews in the Soviet Union. These are not colleagues of American lawyers. Justice is not an issue for a Soviet lawyer. The same is true about Soviet doctors, and particularly Soviet psychiatrists.

Soviet psychiatrists use primarily, like everything in that society, every profession is used for enhancing the Communist cause, for brainwashing people. So, hopefully, we'll hear from Dr. Koryagin. I know that he is finishing his book and I hope Americans and people in the free world will open their eyes and realize what is going on there.

Chairman HOYER. Congressman Florio?

Representative FLORIO. Thank you very much, Rabbi. I was very impressed, as I think we all were, by the sincere, moving nature of your presentation.

I think you weren't here when I made my opening remarks about just coming back from the Soviet Union. A number of things impressed me very dramatically. One is the relatively primitive

state of the economy. Likewise, I observed that the heart of the difference between our system and their system is that we work from the premise that people have certain rights. But, as you have indicated, the system there operates that everything you have is a result of being a member of society and the state gives you everything and the state is the ultimate goal that they all seek to fill the goals of.

I guess my question is, in those two areas, the state goal having the highest priority, the need for control being almost the operating principle of daily life, that the absence of control and nonconformity is a cardinal sin. And the realization that the Soviet leaders appear to be having is that they cannot be a major world power with this primitive economic situation that they have. Therefore, at least the preliminary indications that they want to change the economic system.

The dilemma, of course, is how do you change the bureaucratic economic system that they have which emphasizes control, the lack of ingenuity, the lack of motivation purely from the economic standpoint. Human beings are such that when you give people some liberty to make economic decisions, they're not going to restrict it just to that area.

My question, I guess, is an obvious one. Is there any potential whatsoever to start to see some erosion in this monolithic way of conducting themselves when they are attempting to provide for a higher degree of economic prosperity which needs to have some reduction in control? Can you see any potential for loosening up, not as a conscious decision to provide for religious liberty, to provide for some of the other rights that we're talking about, but almost as an inevitable consequence of the very materialistic desire, which is certainly compatible with the system, to have a more successful economy?

Rabbi FELDMAN. This is a fascinating question. I wish we had a whole discussion just devoted to that topic. I think, first of all, all of us have to address a very major question that I don't see discussed in our media altogether. Are we sure it is in our interests for the Soviet Union to become more efficient economically? I have a lot of problems with that concept.

But let me try to respond to your question. It's a very complex issue. I agree with you. Economically speaking, the Soviet Union is a Third World country. It's so primitive you have no idea because as members of an American official delegation, you have not seen the real Soviet Union. I worked for awhile in a village and when I brushed my teeth the first morning, half of the village gathered together, and this was 15 years ago, to see what I was doing. They had never seen toothpaste in their lives.

In the reports that recently were published by the U.S. Government, I think it was State Department Committee on the state of medicine in the Soviet Union, it's compared to African countries. So, we're talking about a Third World developing country economically.

Is the Soviet Union interested in improving their economy? Yes, this is goal No. 1 for Mr. Gorbachev right now because, as you said, they are beginning to realize that sooner or later just because the

system is not working economically, they will have to pay a very high price. They cannot afford losing the status of a superpower.

The question is: Are they going to risk their major issue which is ideology? And I don't believe that. I warn people not to compare the Soviet Union to China and not to compare the Soviet Union to Poland, or especially Yugoslavia. The Soviet Union will never become another Yugoslavia. There will never be capitalism in the Soviet Union.

They may try an experiment with a few things here and there, but the moment there is a clash with total control or improving economy, they will forfeit the economy and they will choose total control.

The most important goal of that country is to spread communism around the world. The most important goal for Gorbachev, even with all of his openness and glasnost, whatever you call it, is to make sure that Soviet people do not become like American people.

One of the things that few, very few Americans, remember is that that government has a program. The Program of the Communist Party clearly states, it's written in that document that every child in the Soviet Union studies at the age of 10, paragraph 7 reads: "The goal of our society is to create a New Man," capital "N" capital "M." Deep down I believe that the Soviets have been successful. They have created a New Man.

It's true, Soviet people have the same desires, they have the same similar motivations and so on, but I was not shocked like many Americans were when 6 months ago I read in a newspaper a report, an interview, with a woman in Odessa, a mother, who lost both of her sons in Afghanistan. They asked her, "How do you feel, Comrade Petrova?" And she said, "I'm the luckiest mother in the world because my two sons died while fulfilling the international duty of the proletariat."

Now, the question is did she really believe that? Did she really mean what she said? Judaism teaches me to watch actions of people much more than their feelings. I don't really care what Gorbachev feels. I want actions.

So I don't see any hope for real dramatic change. There will never be a revolution in the Soviet Union. It will never become a free country, it will never become an open society. The problem that all of us have, who spend our lives there, is when we open "New York Times" and see on front page like yesterday "New York Times" was saying to us, "Poor Gorbachev, he's in deep trouble. He really wants glasnost, but there are some bureaucrats who are against him." This is a big lie.

The Soviet Union does not believe in openness. Americans, when they read the word "glasnost" they think that all of a sudden Gorbachev decided anything goes now, any journalist can go and report with his camera, go anywhere he wants and report on anything he wants. That's not what relaxation means in the Soviet Union.

What Gorbachev did is the following: He is smart. He understands American mentality. He said, "America likes journalists. America likes free press. America likes when people report on negative sides of life." So he picks up the phone. He calls up the editor of "Pravda" and he says, "You know, for the last 25 years we've

never reported on crime and on corruption. I want in the next 3 weeks to have 73 articles on crime and corruption." So in the next 3 weeks there are 73 articles on crime and corruption and this gets on front pages of "New York Times." Isn't it wonderful, there is openness in the Soviet Union. Now a reporter can go and interview anybody. That's a game.

Gorbachev does not have opposition. This is not the Republicans and Democrats. He has total control. You know, in last 22 months he kicked out anybody he didn't like and he brought to total power his best friends and protégés. He himself made it in life by the age of 54. Again, I want Americans to start asking that question: What kind of a human being does it take by the age of 54 to get to the top of that militaristic junta?

He's not a wonderful human being. He had to walk over dead bodies, and he doesn't hide this, by the way. He became famous within a year and one-half. Nobody ever heard of his name before.

Chairman HOYER. Rabbi, we're going to have to move on because we have four other witnesses we want to hear from.

I just wanted to express my appreciation. Thank you very much for joining us.

Rabbi FELDMAN. Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. We appreciate very much your statement and I'm sure all the audience is as enthusiastic as the individuals who wanted to clap.

Thank you very much.

Rabbi FELDMAN. Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Next we have Rev. Ernest Gordon, has been President of the Christian Rescue Effort for the Emancipation of Dissidents known as CREED since 1983. CREED is a community of people who witness on behalf of the persecuted church in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and communicate with the persecuted via radio and other means.

Prior to his presidency, Rev. Gordon was Dean of the Princeton University Chapel and had held that position since 1955. Before that he served as Minister of the Paisley Abbey in Scotland. His graduate work focused on Russian history and philosophy.

Dr. Gordon, we very much appreciate you're being with us.

Dr. GORDON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Representative FLORIO. Mr. Chairman, if I could, I just want to first of all apologize to Rev. Gordon and to the subsequent witness. Unfortunately, as a result of the time passing, I have some previous commitments that I'm not going to be able to avoid.

I just wanted to pledge to the Reverend and the subsequent witnesses that I am going to read the transcripts and I'm going to be very much committed to working with my colleagues on this Commission and extremely concerned about the types of things that we've been hearing. I've read some of the testimony and want to continue to pledge my support in working to fulfill the goals of the Commission.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you. We thank Congressman Florio for joining us. He's not a member of the Commission, but he took the time to be with us because of his deep commitment to the issues which are being addressed by this hearing, and we thank him for his continuing assistance.

Dr. Gordon.

STATEMENT OF REV. ERNEST GORDON

Dr. GORDON. Thank you, sir. I was just reminded by what Rabbi Feldman said that the revolution that was initiated by Lenin in November 4 to November 7 was a revolution against democracy and religion. And it was conceived in the mind of Lenin to be a worldwide revolution. I think this is a point that must always be kept in mind.

In January 1918, the first law was passed in the Soviet Union regarding the disappearance of the official church, namely the Russian Orthodox Church. It was dispossessed. It lost its property. It was forbidden to do any kind of teaching. The last of its property was taken away in 1921 during the period of the great famine when all of the silver consecrated for sacramental purposes was taken away and used for party purposes.

There are three periods, I think, in the nature of church/state relations in the Soviet Union beginning from 1918 to 1929. The first period saw almost the complete destruction of the Russian Orthodox Church. In 1929, the Law of Religious Association was passed which very clearly defined the nature of the persecution and the deliberate attempt to destroy the church. What could be done was so minimal that it couldn't, in any way, be regarded as any form of religious freedom.

1929 to 1943, marked another period. By 1937, for example, most of the property and the structure of the Russian Orthodox Church had been destroyed. And these are figures that I picked up a long time ago because my concern about the situation in the Soviet Union and in Communist countries goes back to 1945 when I first began my study.

In 1914, for example, the lay membership of the Russian Orthodox Church was numbered at 117.4 million. There were 67 bishoprics with 130 bishops. Church buildings numbered 54,174 plus 550 monasteries with 21,300 monks and 473 convents with 72,299 nuns. Fifty seminaries existed to assure an adequate supply of priests.

By 1940 there were fewer than 40,000 churches and 20 bishops. The lay membership was 40,000, that is so far as official figures were concerned.

And although the structure and the form of the Russian Orthodox Church, which is very important to its life, were almost completely destroyed, this nevertheless did not result in the destruction of religion in the lives of the people. But one very significant thing occurred in 1943, and I think it's very important for the understanding of our relationships with the Soviet Union and the churches in the Soviet Union at that time. After the abolition of the patriarchy when Patriarch Tikhon died, I believe it was 1925, his place was taken by Metropolitan Sergei of Moscow. Because of the good services offered to the Soviet Union by Sergei, he was elevated to the patriarchy in 1943.

Shortly after he was elevated to the patriarchy, two councils of religious affairs were formed, one dealing with the religious affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and one dealing with the religious

affairs of the non-Orthodox churches. They were later united in 1965 to form the present Council on Religious Affairs.

What I think was recognized by Stalin in 1943 was that he couldn't completely destroy religion in the lives of the people, but what he could do was control it. Patriarch Sergei only lasted a year, less than a year. His reign was a very short one. But he was followed by Patriarch Alexci who voluntarily committed himself to serving the purpose of the state by means of propaganda.

And so I think what happened at that time when a degree of freedom was offered to the church in 1943 was that Stalin recognized that if he couldn't destroy the church, he could control it. And not only could he control it, but he could use it as an instrument of propaganda to the West.

And we find, for example, that it was 1961 that the Russian Orthodox Church was admitted to the membership of the World Council of Churches. Now, this was a period of extreme persecution under Khrushchev very similar to the persecution that had prevailed during the time of Stalin.

Prior to the Russian Orthodox Church seeking admission to the World Council of Churches there has been an all national sobor or council in Moscow at which it had been declared that the World Council of Churches was thoroughly an enigma, that it was only an instrument of imperialistic, capitalistic power. So it seemed surprising that in 1961, at a time when the persecution of the church was at its height, when 10,000 churches had been closed, when five seminaries had been closed and when innumerable leaders religious leaders of vitality, had been imprisoned or executed, it seems extraordinary that the World Council of Churches should have been the means by which the Russian Orthodox Church should seek to open a way to the West. And this was necessary for Khrushchev in order to engage the West in his policy of propaganda. One of the basic principles of that propaganda is that the Soviet Union must appear as the peace lover and the peace leader in the world of our time.

One of the significant movements of our time goes back to the sixties at the very time of the intense persecution under Khrushchev, when a number of writers expressed their dismay and said very much what our good friend Rabbi Feldman has said about the Soviet Union compelling everyone to believe and to accept its ideology, not only nationwide but also worldwide. And it's very interesting, therefore, that you can see the development of a number of offshoots of the peace movement initiated by Soviet propaganda.

But at that time, several dedicated writers formed what would be a new religious movement, a new form of religious awareness in the Soviet Union which is very anti this atheistic ideology of so-called scientific materialism. Two great leaders of that period are Pasternak and Solzhenitsyn. They are the first generation of this new wave of religious awareness. They, and many others with them, have been very seriously persecuted and had I the time, I could tell you more about that.

But the second wave is the wave that occurs in the seventies. I think we must realize that the Helsinki accords are extremely important, not only because they provide us with some kind of instru-

ment in international agreements and in international discussions, but because it gave to the people of the Communist countries a great hope. They saw that the West wasn't as decadent as the propaganda made it out to be and they also saw that people were genuinely interested in freedom and particularly in the freedom to worship. In the many transcripts that I've read, so many of the people who were tried in the period of the seventies have indicated that their sympathies lay with the West because they shared that same world view, which was a religious world view.

I'm afraid my time's up. In conclusion, let me say we are seeing the benefits of those two waves, that of the sixties and that of the seventies, which have influenced a significant number of intellectuals, not only in the Soviet Union, but in Eastern Europe.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Rev. Gordon. We appreciate that overview. Perhaps we should have led off with that rather than have you in the middle.

Let me ask you something. You have, obviously, a historical point of view and background. Given that, we have what Rabbi Feldman referred to as atmospherics that seem to be pleasing to the West.

Dr. GORDON. Yes.

Chairman HOYER. But not any evidence of substantive change nor any possibility of substantive change. Do you share that view?

Dr. GORDON. Yes, I do. I think Gorbachev is a master of propaganda and he learned a great deal from Yuri Andropov. You'll recall, that in Andropov's short period in power, he introduced a number of increasingly restrictive laws such as 188-3 by which a dissident imprisoned under article 70 could be reimprisoned, resented at the will of the local prison governor for a period of 3 to 5 years. There were other laws and additions to laws by which citizens of the Soviet Union could be punished for taking a foreigner into their home or giving him overnight lodgings. So we've seen, actually, the increase of restrictions upon personal freedom.

1925 was the period when this great atheistic mission was formed and repeatedly from that time on we have had the heads of state say time and time again, repeated by Khrushchev, repeated by Yuri Andropov, and now repeated recently by Gorbachev, that we must intensify our atheistic propaganda or atheistic education.

One of the complaints they have made over the past, and I think that this has been made in almost every regime, is that the intellectuals of the Soviet Union are incapable of providing the definitive book or definitive article on scientific materialism, and they object to the fact that publications, which are not official, namely *samizdat* manuscripts and literature are eagerly read by so many of the intellectuals. It was very interesting, by the way that at the time of the peace conference in May 1982, seven members of the Russian Orthodox Church were arrested and imprisoned for translating into Russian the works of Chesterton. One of them was a study on man which was very much along the line of the philosophical thinking of those who are participating in this new religious awakening in the Soviet Union.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you, Doctor. There are a lot of other questions I'd like to ask you, but you're right, time is—

Dr. GORDON. Running out.

Chairman HOYER [continuing]. Has fallen away. But I want to recognize Congressman Smith.

Representative SMITH. Dr. Gordon, thank you and I appreciate you putting today's discussion in that historical prospective and context because I think when we lose sight of where we've been, we incorrectly predict what way we're heading and what the future will be.

I think, not only our press, but our politicians and perhaps as a result of that, many of the American people really don't have the requisite understanding of the Soviet system and the ideology, the militant atheistic viewpoint that they espouse and the fact that they are internationalists. The Soviets don't believe—you know, that the revolution stops at the borders. And I just finished reading another book by Pastor Wurmbrandt. I've read just about all of his books and the most recent one was "Where Christ Still Suffers." In this book he makes a point in that one of the real problems with Western countries and Western journalism and politicians is that we feign or we really do believe in always being objective and we are not guarding ourselves.

For instance, an interviewer is going to go and take President Reagan's view or the view of a human rights group, it then gets the corresponding view from the Soviet Embassy, which could be a pack of lies, but they get equal time.

So you get a distorted view of the truth. I remember when Vice President Bush and Jack Kemp were on a talk show. And they were talking about Andropov, who was the former head of the KGB, and the fact that George Bush, who is the former head of the CIA. The press was making the comparison that Bush and Andropov were one in the same. There is no comparison, but as Wurmbrandt puts it, there is "the sin of objectivity." That's his words. Maybe you'd want to touch on that.

Dr. GORDON. Yes.

Representative SMITH. This "sin of objectivity" Leads to wrong conclusions on our part.

Dr. GORDON. It's a false view. It's a complete disregard for truth and I think that it's very obvious that from the time of Marx on, this so-called scientific materialism is a product of Western secular thought. I've written a book about this. It is a product of Western secular thought. Marx was the great synthesizer of this thought. From Marx on you have this conviction that there is only one way of thinking and that is this way of scientific materialism. It is the only truth, and there can be no compromise. Even when you read the literature that is put out in English for propaganda purposes, not only by the Soviet Union, but by countries such as Czechoslovakia, you will find statements such as this, that while we tolerate religion in our Communist state, we recognize that it is a lie. A lie because communism can be the only truth.

And with this kind of mindset, you can see why the persecution of those who dare to think for themselves, those who dare to be religious, those who dare to be intellectuals in their own right rather than within the mindset of Communist ideology, you can see why they're persecuted.

Representative SMITH. Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. We are out of time, unfortunately. Doctor, we could have, I think, spent a whole afternoon or a whole morning on the testimony given by our first three witnesses and we thank you for being with us.

Dr. GORDON. Thank you, sir.

Chairman HOYER. Perhaps, if we have additional questions we could give them to you in writing.

Dr. GORDON. Thank you very much.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you.

Now, I want to apologize to our next three witnesses. We don't want to in anyway downgrade them, but we want to hear them all. We have about 50 minutes to go. So I'm going to ask our next three witnesses if they would come up to the witness table at the same time and then we'll proceed.

And as I introduce them, if they would please take the rostrum.

First of all, we have Father Roman Mirchuk who is the Pastor of Saint Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic Church in Jersey City, New Jersey and the Assumption of the B.V.M. Ukrainian Catholic Church in Bayonne, New Jersey.

I want to say that Father Mirchuk was invited to be with us by Senator Heinz.

At this time I also want to introduce Ms. Margot Terentiew, is that close? Who was born in Poland. It's got the year here but I don't think that's necessarily relevant.

She came to the United States in 1982 to study at the Annenberg School of Communications and received her Master's Degree there in 1985.

Since her graduation, she has been the news editor of the "Polish Daily News" and has also been the Executive Editor of "New Horizon," a Polish American review published in English. She is a current resident of Perth Amboy, New Jersey.

She was invited to be with us by Senator Lautenberg. Neither Senator Lautenberg nor Senator Heinz are here, as you can tell. They wanted to be here. Unfortunately for our hearing, not necessarily for the Nation, the Senate is in session and, in fact, the supplemental appropriation bill is on the floor. In addition, Senator Heinz is in markup on the catastrophic health insurance legislation.

One of the problems with scheduling hearings is, you can't always predict what the House and the Senate will be doing.

Last, I would like to ask to come forward Mrs. Justine Wesnak who is the President of the Jozef Cardinal Tomka Chapter of the Slovak Catholic Federation which is based in Lehigh Valley here in Pennsylvania. The Slovak Catholic Federation is designed to help Slovak Catholics throughout the United States.

Born and raised in Scranton, Pennsylvania, Mrs. Wesnak was educated in Catholic schools and attended the Mercy Hospital School of Nursing and Marywood College.

She was active in school, church and community affairs. She also serves on several national Slovak boards, most notably as President of the Youth Committee of the Slovak World Congress. In addition, Mrs. Wesnak traveled to Czechoslovakia in 1985.

As you heard Congressman Smith and I were in Czechoslovakia a few months ago.

Mrs. Wesnak is a current resident of Whitehall, Pennsylvania and the Lehigh Valley.

On behalf of Senator Heinz and Senator Lautenberg and Congressman Ritter, I want to welcome each of you. Congressman Ritter, unfortunately, had a meeting at 9 o'clock this morning. He is trying to get here, I'm informed. I know that all three of them very much appreciate your taking the time out of your schedules to join us. And I know that they will be reading the transcript of your testimony so that your testimony will not be lost on them, certainly not on Congressman Smith, Congressman Florio and myself.

Father, let me start left to right, if I can. And again, thank you for being with us.

**STATEMENTS OF FATHER ROMAN MIRCHUK, MS. MARGOT
TERENTIEW AND MRS. JUSTINE WESNAK**

Father MIRCHUK. I'm here to speak about the persecution of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Soviet Union.

First of all, I wish to state that this church oftentimes in Soviet terminology is the Uniate Church, which of course we resent because that implies that we are traitors of the Russian Orthodox Church. We are Catholics and we've always been Catholics and we prefer to use either the Ukrainian Free Catholic Church, which is the term used by the underground Ukrainian Church or Ukrainian Catholics. And we also prefer to be called the Church of the Ukrainian Rite by—which the Ukraine is a separate nation and a separate state and we are not part of any other nation.

The Ukrainian Catholic Church finds itself in a very enviable situation because it is, aside from the Jehovah's Witnesses, the only religious body that in the present time in the Soviet Union is officially banned, outlawed, illegal, et cetera.

Second—in other words, you can travel within the breadth of the Soviet Union, despite the fact that religion is oppressed and persecuted, you can find Orthodox and Catholic churches, synagogues, Protestant meetings houses. You cannot find a Ukrainian Catholic Church. There is no legal Ukrainian Catholic clergymen officiating according to the Ukrainian Catholic Rite. They do so illegally underground, but this is—of course, if they are arrested, they are punished by either fines or by imprisonment.

Second, the Ukrainian Catholic Church finds itself in the position of being persecuted, not only by the Soviet Government, but also by the Russian Orthodox Church.

Just a little bit of a historical background to make—in other words, to explain my statement. In 1944 before western Ukraine, which up to the Second World War had been a part of the Polish Republic, we had 10 Ukrainian Catholic bishops, two apostolic administrators, 2,950 diocesan and 520 monastic priests, 1,090 nuns, 3,040 parishes with 4,440 churches and chapels, 195 monasteries and convents, 8 seminaries and 4,383,000 faithful.

In 1946 the Soviet Government, which officially is atheistic and has nothing to do with religion, staged a reunion council. Already on April 11, 1945, all Ukrainian Catholic bishops were arrested, deported to Kiev, the capital of the Soviet Ukraine Republic, and

were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment in Siberia. Some of them died in Kiev while in prison because of their age.

So-called council of 1946 officially decreed the liquidation of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and its reunion with the Russian Orthodox Church. Present we're only 219 priests and of the, as I mentioned, 2,950 diocesan priests, only 1,000—I'm sorry, 986 priests or 49 percent actually signed. Many of them signed under force, many of them signed at the request of their parishioners who just wanted a church, they didn't want to be deprived of a priest, and to have their churches closed. From then on it became punishable by Soviet law to be a Ukrainian Catholic priest or a Ukrainian Catholic.

All of the properties of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, churches, seminaries, monasteries, et cetera, were taken over by the Russian Orthodox Church and to this day they are the property of that church and the Ukrainian Catholic faithful have to access unless they belong to the Russian Orthodox Church.

After the death of Stalin and the de-Stalinisation period officially after 1956, many of those who had been sentenced to Siberia, most of them received 10-year terms, returned and they then initiated the underground Ukrainian Catholic Church.

When this movement began to gain force and repute, the Soviets tried to infiltrate. There had been a movement which was called the Penitent movement based upon the apparitions of the Mother of God in a village called Seretnal in western Ukraine. It was very melanistic. In other words, the fact that the end of the world is coming, the Soviet Government is the anti-Christ, we need to repent, we need to pray, we do not recognize the Soviet Government, it is the agency of Satan. We return our passports, we have nothing to do with the Soviet Government.

And the Soviet Government infiltrated this movement and tried to use it to drive in a wedge into the Ukrainian Catholic Church. They didn't succeed, I might add, because if I can call it the official Ukrainian Catholic underground very quickly got a hold of the movement and to one of its priests, the Reverend Ignatius Soltys channeled it into the underground Ukrainian Catholic movement.

I'm going to jump to the 1980's because I know we're pressed for time. But the Ukrainian Catholic Church began to gain momentum in the 1980's. September 9, 1982, a group of Ukrainian Catholics, Vasyl Kobryn, Jozif Terelya, the Reverend Hrihory Gudzinski formed the initiative group for the defense of the rights of believers and of the church in Ukraine. Its purpose was to use the Helsinki Agreement to get rights for Ukrainian Catholics in the Soviet Union.

A little bit afterwards the Central Committee of the Ukrainian Catholics was formed and Jozif Terelya was chosen or became the head of this group.

From the 1980's, especially from January or February 1984, a underground Ukrainian Catholic journal was published called the "Chronical of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Ukraine." And to date, 10 numbers of this—10 issues of this journal have appeared and they chronical different episodes of persecution of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Now, basically this initiative grew. Also tried to attain legalization of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, though there was a split in the underground whether legalization was really desired because they feared: (a) infiltration; (b) control as had happened with the Russian Orthodox Church. They also believed that the fact that the aura of martyrdom can further the cause of the Ukrainian Church rather than legalization itself. So that the movement is influx in regards to legalization of their church.

Of course, I'm sure the Commission is mostly interested to what extent glasnost of Gorbachev has any influence on its relationship to the Ukrainian Catholic Church. In mid-April when Mr. Shultz was in the Soviet Union, Mr. Richard Schifter who is the Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, met with Mr. Constantine Kharchev who is the Chairman of the State Committee on Religious Affairs. And Mr. Schifter raised the issue of the Ukrainian Catholic Church. And he was told that there would be no discussion of this issue because it is a political issue. The Soviet Government considers the Ukrainian Catholic Church an instrument of the Ukrainian nationalism.

When Mr. Schifter raised the issue of Jozif Terelya who had been arrested back in 1981, had been sentenced to a long-term imprisonment because of his activities and who, on February 6 of this year had been released, who is very sick and is seeking the right to emigrate to the West for medical purposes, Mr. Kharchev again informed him that this is not a matter for discussion. Mr. Terelya is not a believer, he is a political activist, hence he is beyond the pale of the law in regards to religious beliefs.

It is interesting to point out in this respect that what the Government does nowadays is, it tries not to sentence or try Ukrainian Catholics merely on religious grounds. Very often they're tried with the—according to article 187-1 of the Soviet—or the Ukraine Soviet Criminal Code which deals with slander against the Soviet political and social order.

For example, Mr. Kobryn who is presently the head of the Initiative Group, was tried according to this code.

Now, the reasoning of the Government is, since these people, the Ukrainian Catholics are not registered, then they are not believers. If they are not believers, they must be unbelievers. And if they are unbelievers or believing unbelievers, then they must believe in the religion of nationalism. Hence, they are enemies of the state since nationalism is against the Soviet political regime.

We have, of course, in the underground Chronicle many statements in regards to the attitude or the stance of the Soviet Government in regards to the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

One Ukrainian Catholic priest from western Ukraine wrote:

In the last few years I was able to get around my village quite freely. People would open the closed churches, we would celebrate services. Now such services are impossible. They can only be celebrated in private homes of trustworthy people.

A Ukrainian Catholic layman from Ternopil, a city in western Ukraine wrote:

Things have gotten better for the Orthodox Christians. They have gotten worse for Ukrainian Catholics.

I have an episode which took place in June 1985 to a woman by the name of Maria Trikur who had been sentenced several times for being a Ukrainian Catholic. She had just returned from incarceration. She was approached in broad daylight by a lieutenant of the militia by the name of Starosta. He grabbed her by the hair, dragged down the streets of the city of Dovhe, which is in the trans-Carpathian region of the Ukrainian Soviet Republic, to the militia headquarters. There she was told to sign a confession that she will have nothing to do with the Ukrainian Catholic underground. She refused. He threatened to burn her house, to rape her and he said nothing will ever happen to me because I am the arm of the law.

Now, I wish to point out that Trikur's children have been taken away from her, have been put in a state orphanage precisely because she is a believer. At the orphanage the crosses around their necks have been torn off. They have been forced to state that they want nothing to do with them, but of course the children, especially one of the daughters said to the teachers, that they are the agents of Satan because they wish to destroy religion.

We have a movement among the Ukrainian Catholics to return their Soviet passports. In 1985, I don't have more recent data, in the trans-Carpathian area itself, 290 people returned their passports stating "that they do not wish to be Soviet citizens because the Soviet Union is the kingdom of Satan."

In western Ukraine all of the people have turned back their passports and 520 others have burned their passports.

For example, what are some of the repressions? Very often Ukrainian Catholics or people who state that they are Ukrainian Catholics or lobby for the Ukrainian Catholic movement and—lobby can mean signing a petition to open a church in a given village—they are oftentimes expelled from work. They are denied registration. If you are not registered, you cannot live in a particular area. And they're accused of the crime of parasitism. This is the newest form of getting rid of people that don't have work, and obviously they can't work if they are denied work.

To have Bibles, catechisms or prayer books, you are fined between 50 and 100 rubles. For the "Prayer for the Ukrainian People" written by the greatest Ukrainian Metropolitan Andrew Sheptitsky, who died in 1944 before the church was liquidated, it is 3 years imprisonment according to article 209 of the Soviet Ukrainian Criminal Code.

Of course, the Ukrainian Catholic Church continues to exist in the underground. There are, according to reliable reports, five bishops, some 400 clergy. In the past year some 100 priests of the illegal Ukrainian Catholic Church have been ordained. Most of them have a higher education. Many of them get low paying jobs as security watchmen, night caretakers so that they can also work as Ukrainian Catholic priests.

There have been a series of arrests of Ukrainian priests, although some have been freed. Now, I would also mention as an aside, some of the churches have also been bulldozed by the Soviets precisely because the people refuse to accept a Russian Orthodox priest.

The persecution has intensified lately because of two particular events. One is in 1986, the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the "Reunion of the Ukrainian Church with the Russian Orthodox Church." This campaign is led by the Russian Orthodox, particularly by a Metropolitan of Lviv and Archbishop Makariy of Ivano-Frankivsk—formerly known as Stanislaviv. One of his interviews with the Kiev radio, Archbishop Makariy says, "I state with emphasis that in this area as well as in all of Ukraine, there is no such thing as the Uniate underground church." Of course, in the later interview he was forced to acknowledge that many of the people refused to go to the Russian Orthodox Church.

Now, they are very, so to speak, up tight about the legalization or the possibility of the legalization of the Ukrainian Catholic Church because one-half of all Russian Orthodox Churches in the Soviet Union are in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. And one-fourth of all the churches in the Soviet Union are in western Ukraine, that is an area which was formerly Catholic.

Most of the priests are also from Ukraine.

I know we're going to finish and I have just one other thing to say.

The second thing is that the Russian Government, Soviet Government; is intensifying its campaign in conjunction with the millennium of Christianity in Ukraine. They wish to present this as a Russian affair rather than as the millennium of Christianity in Ukraine.

I wish to conclude just to give you an idea of the intensity with which the Ukrainian Catholic Church is being persecuted, not only as a religious body but also as the defender of the Ukrainian cultural national rights—the fact that in Ukraine itself there are some 200 concentration camps with more than 390,000 prisoners plus 10,000 prisoners found in 29 psychiatric hospitals and one special prison, VI315-30 in Lviv. Of the prisoners, now many of them are Ukrainians who might be Catholics, but they were imprisoned because they might be speaking Ukrainian, defending the Ukrainian culture, et cetera. Of the prisoners, 300 are Ukrainian Catholics, 29 are Baptists, 2 are Pentecostals, 15 Jehovah's Witnesses, 5 are Adventists and 39 are Orthodox. And one of the threats which is used by the Soviet Government now, is the threat of being sent to Chernobyl. We have reliable reports that a concentration camp has been opened in Chernobyl and 95 percent of the inmates are Ukrainian Catholics, especially priests and religious. The Soviets are using this especially for medical purposes, medical studies to see what the effect is of radiation on live human beings.

I thank you very much for listening to my testimony on behalf of the Ukrainian Catholic Church.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much, Father. I would like to recognize our other witnesses before additional questions.

Ms. Terentiew?

Ms. TERENTIEW. I'd like to speak about religious freedom in Poland. With respect to religious freedom, I must say that Poland's position is unique. Unlike in the Soviet Union religious practices are not restricted. This statement, however, cannot be left without qualifications which I will make later.

In recent years I have heard of nobody in Poland who has been prosecuted or persecuted for practicing religion in the strict sense of the word—that is, for publicly expressing their religious beliefs. Nor have I had any firsthand experience of this kind.

Poland is a predominantly Roman Catholic country and all the Catholic rituals like baptism, holy communion, confirmation are performed freely.

The same applies to church marriage, even though such marriage is not legally binding, and church attendance. With the obvious exception of Communist Party members—and army officers, especially political officers who often practice religion secretly or at least inconspicuously, everybody can attend church and go to Mass. Mass is said every day, depending on how the local vicar assesses the needs of his parishioners.

Although the teaching of religion is no longer allowed as it once was directly after World War II—it is banned in primary schools, which are obligatory for everybody, under the constitutional principle of separation of the church and state. But catechism can be taught, and indeed it is, anywhere on church premises outside school. Parents may arrange for their children's or their own religious instructions.

I myself was christened in church and had catechism at school. I went to primary school in that short period of time when it was still allowed. I attended church and had a church marriage and I was not in any way persecuted or prosecuted.

Insofar as atheism is promoted by means of school curricula, which are designed to instill Marxist-Leninist ideology, it can be said to replace Catholicism. Indeed, in recent years local clergy encouraged the hanging of crucifixes in school rooms and the episcopate complained publicly about Marxism being taught as a kind of alternative religion.

No religious teaching is allowed in the primary schools at all, but, in addition to a few religious intermediate-level schools run by Catholic nuns like the one at Szymanow, near Warsaw, there is an academic institution of international renown, the Catholic University of Lublin which really provides a haven not only for scholars of the strictly Catholic denomination, but also for those who, for political reasons, are unable to work at other universities. The latter may even declare a rather loose devotion to the Catholic faith.

There are clerical seminaries and one academy of Christian theology in Warsaw which prepares for priesthood both in the Catholic and Orthodox order.

Another haven for intellectuals declaring Catholic affiliation without necessarily practicing religion is provided by the church press, notably the "Catholic Weekly"—It is one of the few magazines allowed to mark clearly all censorship suppressions. Unlike strictly opposition underground publications, it is published legally and enjoys the measure of editorial freedom not accorded to other above ground or official publications.

Non-Catholic believers are also allowed to practice religion, although their religious practices are not encouraged. Religious practices in general are tolerated in the strictest sense of the word, that is neither encouraged, neither persecuted nor helped to thrive in

any way. Temples and works of religious art of the relatively few Orthodox Christians, Jews, Protestants and Moslems are left totally in the care of respective religious communities. However, conscientious objectors citing religious beliefs such as Pentecostals are prosecuted.

The only two instances of persecution of religious believers I know of (and these have to be qualified, too) are: The killing of the Reverend Jerzy Popieluszko in October 1984 and the practice of granting one religious high school in Warsaw the right to issue matriculation diplomas yearly at a very short notice.

This is what the present state of affairs in Poland looks like. You can say that Poland is, in religious terms, free and people in Poland enjoy religious freedom. But, it is often said—that is now a platitude—that the church in Poland is a highly politicized institution. Indeed, particularly in recent years the political clout of the Polish Catholic Church has manifested itself quite clearly.

In lifting economic sanctions against the Warsaw regime, which had been imposed for suppressing "Solidarity," the United States based its decision on the opinions of Poland's opposition leaders and those of the Polish American Congress, but also, maybe primarily on the position taken by the Polish episcopate. General Jaruzelski had to seek the church's recommendation beside that of the Italian Government to be received in the Vatican.

Another telling example of the church taking on a political role came recently when an organization called Freedom and Peace, not a religious one, held an international seminar at the premises of a church in Warsaw. The Freedom and Peace group was established a few years ago to protect conscientious objectors who refused military service under the oath of allegiance to the Soviet Union. They are not Pentecostals. They do not cite religious beliefs for refusing to serve in the army.

The organization has evolved into a major pacifist organization dealing, among other issues, with environment protection. That group is illegal in Poland. It is at this point, I think, that the human rights as including religious freedom, clash in Poland with the civil rights denied to the Polish people by its Communist rulers.

It is also at this point that the role of the Polish Church as the preserver of human rights manifests itself in a prominent way. As has been pointed out, Poland is the country in which people can exercise their right to practice religion freely. The definition of what constitutes religious practice is set forth by the Government and as long as the religious community stays within the limits of that definition, there are no problems.

The Helsinki accords provide a mechanism for assisting the church in assessing in moral terms the political realities of the country by spelling out the human rights that the rulers have consented to observe.

June 1985, a conference of Catholic Bishops in Poland stated that the church had an obligation to defend civil and human rights, protect human dignity and render moral judgment on political affairs. During his visit to Chile earlier this year, Pope John Paul II said clearly that while democracy was not itself the aim of Catholic teaching—the Catholic Church, insofar as it promoted human

rights and human dignity, it was naturally preferable to the Vatican to the oppressive regimes that may otherwise declare themselves as God-fearing or religious.

The position of the Polish Catholic Church is based on the assumption of this very right and obligation to judge political reality in the country without aspiring to become a political power *sensu stricto*.

I would like to just say very briefly about the event that moved the Polish people probably the most within the last couple of years. And that's the murder of Rev. Popieluszko. The church is not a monolithic organization and while the primate, informed by his diplomatic contacts with representatives of the Government, and instructed by the Pope, may discourage openly the political pronouncements from the pulpit, the clergy, remaining in closer touch with their own parishioners, and themselves bearing the burden of Poland's economic crisis, may not exercise caution and proper restraint and tend to voice the parishioners' dissatisfaction with the system.

It is now common knowledge, in fact a one sided interpretation, that the Reverend Popieluszko was murdered for openly voicing his political opinions which the Government termed subversive and thus explained, if not condoned, the murder. There is no doubt in my mind that the death of Popieluszko was an accident, not a deed ordered by supervisors of the perpetrators at the Ministry of the Internal Affairs or the equivalent department of the party.

The murderers have been duly brought to trial. According to Attorney Wladyslaw Sila-Nowicki, a respected and competent lawyer, who visited the United States last year, the accused were tried and sentenced in accordance with the strictest provisions of the law. Yet, the sentences of the three of them were later considerably shortened by the Minister of Internal Affairs. Ironically, as the country was commemorating the second anniversary of the murder.

Thus the Government claimed and confirmed for itself the right to discriminate between religious freedom which many think the Reverend Popieluszko was exercising on behalf of his parishioners from his political obligation as a citizen to keep quiet about oppression disguised as *raison d'état*. (The misconstrued regard for observing *raison d'état* lies at the root of most violations of human rights in Poland. The most obvious of which is denying authentic political representation, active participation in the government to those citizens who lack the approval of the Communist apparatus.)

That the murderers of Popieluszko were brought to trial at all was regarded by many Poles as a sign of liberalization. A sorry liberalization indeed. Yet citizens of other countries of the bloc envy Poles even that, stressing that Poland has a unique position.

Let me conclude now by saying that it is not inherent characteristics of Poland's current political system that account for the present liberalized state of affairs with respect to either religious freedom or broadly conceived human rights. On the contrary, it is the inefficiencies of the Communist rule in general and the weaknesses of the system as applied to this particular deeply religious people that have contributed to Poland's unique situation.

In other words, Poland's relative freedom has originated outside her political system precisely in opposition to it. The church having taken a stand with the people against the foreign oppression has forced the authorities to liberalize. The church has raised human rights and made the Government see the connection between the necessity to let go of the people just a little bit and the chance to be deceived and talked to by the world. In this respect it can be argued that the current liberal trend in Poland is unlike the *glasnost* in the Soviet Union. In the Soviet Union, moves towards more liberal treatment of citizens by the Government, appear to be a conscious pragmatic choice in the face of an imminent threat to the system on which the country is based. In Poland, on the other hand, liberal procedures have been instituted against members of the ruling apparatus. The Government must reckon with the church in Poland. In the Soviet Union—it need not. In the Soviet Union, for historical reasons, the subjugation of the church has resulted from the traditional perception of church and state as a dual power. In Poland, if the Government were to feel that it no longer has to talk to the church, it would attempt to fight against the church, not by political means but by physical oppression and reprisals.

And this appears true regardless of reported infighting among factions which are said to exist and launch mutual hostilities within the apparatus, be it in Poland or the Soviet Union.

For a man in the street going to church to attend Sunday Mass, the infighting has no relevance. To him, the supposed opponents within the ruling apparatus turn a uniformly hostile face.

Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much for that very informative statement. I know we've rushed you a little bit and I do apologize for that, but you have given us a lot of information and we very much appreciate that.

Mrs. Wesnak?

Mrs. WESNAK. I am pleased to have this opportunity to testify in your presence on the subject of religious intolerance, especially as it affects my Slovak brothers and sisters living in the Slovak Socialist Republic in Czechoslovakia.

Personally, I welcome every opportunity to promote an awareness of the lack of freedom and self determination of the people of Slovakia.

As most of you know, Slovakia is the smallest country in central Europe, therefore its inhabitants have always been exploited by its larger neighbors. Located in the eastern region of Czechoslovakia, it is bordered on the north by Poland, south by Austria and Hungary and west by the Czech Socialist Republic and on the east by the Soviet Union.

Slovak people, always known for their hard work and spirituality, have survived thousands of years of oppression of one form or another and they have continually progressed since their Christianization in the early ninth century.

In the early 1900's they were an uneducated nation of farmers. Today they're an industrialized nation of highly educated people with internationally renowned universities and research centers to their credit.

Despite the fact that Slovakia is at the crossroads of central Europe, our people have managed to preserve their own culture and national identity. Their struggle today is for self determination and freedom, including the freedom of religion.

The culture of the Slovak people is directly linked with its religion. Historically, the local clergy rather than any state officials have been the recognized leaders of our people. Consequently, it is understandable that the Communist regime considers the church, especially in Slovakia, its main enemy and therefore spares no efforts in trying to destroy the formal church and thus, to crush the spirit of our people.

Since February 1948, Slovakia has remained a Communist state enduring constant religious persecution. There was a short lived period free of persecution during the leadership of Dubcek in the spring of 1968 when Czechoslovakia became a federal state consisting of two Socialistic Republics, one Czech and one Slovak. There has been no letup in the Communist persecution of Christians since the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia on August 21, 1968. That persecution has been demonstrated in acts ranging from harassment to exile of hundreds of religious and in 1981 the most brutal murder of a priest heard of outside of prison walls. It was, of course, never proven that Rev. Coufal was murdered.

The year 1975 was one of historical importance in Slovakia. In the spring, several zealous priests suffered assassination attempts. The attempt on the life of reverend Doctor Jan Cierny succeeded.

I'm sure that all present today are especially interested in what results the Helsinki Conference of 1975 had on religious persecutions in Slovakia. The conclusion of that Conference marked a further deterioration in the conditions facing the church there.

The party was provoked to new atrocities against Christians and their priests in Slovakia in their determination to convince them that the Final Act of the Helsinki accords would not induce the Government to allow greater pastoral activity.

The secret police interrogated hundreds of priests, threatening and intimidating them in various ways using isolation, bullying, public humiliation and even physical violence.

The national press printed the provisions of the Helsinki accords, but this stopped after the citizens began to appeal for their enforcement.

As far as Slovakia was concerned, except for the brief respite the church enjoyed before the Conference, the Helsinki détente never penetrated the nation's borders.

Pacem-in-Terris is named for Pope John the XXIII's encyclical—which translates as peace on earth. It is a priest peace movement sponsored by the Communist government in defiance of the Vatican. The priest involved in this movement are, for the most part, puppets of the Communist regime whose purpose is to come between the faithful and their trusted religious leaders.

In 1975, this peace movement held an October convention at which the deputy chairman of the Communist National Front, Thomas Travnicek dared to say openly before assembled priests that the Government's aim is a total liquidation of the church and of religion. A delayed reply came in the third of a series of the un-

derground pamphlets published for the first time in 1975 and later known as the "Slovak Catholic Samizdat" which stated:

It is astonishing. Communist declare without hesitation that Marxism and religion are incompatible opposites yet if a priest or any Christian were to claim that Christianity is contrary to Marxism, he would be accused and sentenced for counter revolutionary agitation.

As further proof of the ongoing attempt of the Communist to destroy the church in Slovakia, I offer you these facts. Before the Communist takeover there were 10 Catholic seminaries, now there are 2. One for the Czech land and one for Slovakia. The number of candidates is severely limited and all applicants must be approved by the Government.

Of the 13 Catholic dioceses, only 3 are still headed by resident bishops, one of whom is Cardinal Tomasek who is 88 years of age and the others are over 70.

Several dioceses have not had a bishop for over 30 years.

The Catholic press is severely limited with one Czech and one Slovak paper. In 1985, when Archbishop Jozef Tomko became the first Slovak cardinal in this century, his appointment was never mentioned in the Catholic press there.

Also in 1985, when the Czechs and Slovaks celebrated the 1100 anniversary of the death of St. Methodias, Pope John Paul the II who wanted to participate in the festivities was denied entrance to Czechoslovakia by the Prague regime.

In 1986, when exiled Slovak Bishop Paul Hnilica, S.J.'s mother died, after pleading with the Prague government including a public plea from Pope John Paul II in Rome, a visa was denied the bishop to attend his own mother's funeral. A well-known Slovak American Bishop, Andrew Grutka of Gary, Indiana was continually denied a visa since 1969. In September 1986, he was finally granted a restricted visa which permitted him to travel in Czechoslovakia only as a lay person. He was denied the right to celebrate Mass publicly.

Bishop John Korec, S.J. who was secretly ordained a bishop has not been able to function in priestly ministry. He is a common laborer in Bratislava where he has lived for more than 20 years. Last year in 1986, Notre Dame University awarded him an honorary doctorate. The Czechoslovak Government refused to let him travel to the United States to receive this award. He is a witness to the continued violation of the right to worship guaranteed by the Czechoslovak Constitution.

An announcement was made in Austria that Father Hanus, an 80-year-old priest, was found guilty of hearing confessions. His trial took place in northern Slovakia on March 10 of this year. The Vatican radio announced in April 1987, that a priest in Slovakia was sentenced to jail for celebrating Mass in a private home. Father Javorsky was previously convicted and sentenced in 1975 and also in 1981.

Yes, the church in Slovakia is badly wounded, but it still lives. As a leader of Slovak youth on a national and international level, I am extremely proud of the youth of Slovakia who have truly come of age. They are a generation that is not afraid to express their faith regardless of the threats of not being allowed to continue their education and that their future as a whole might be at risk if they persist in religious activities.

Attendance at the religious pilgrimages which began in 1975 has increased. 1984 will be known as the year of massive religious demonstrations in Sastin and Levoca.

Conservative estimates number the believers attending the feast at Marian Hill in Levoca, most of them young people, at 150,000. The pilgrimage was not haphazard. It was a well planned major feast of the faith and testimony to the very strong faith of those who risked the threatened consequences to attend.

In the words of Rev. Anton Hlinka noted Slovak author who works in Munich with Voice of America, and assists the Slovak community throughout Western Europe and the gentleman from whom much of my information comes:

The Christian idealism that inspires many determined men and women outweighs the evil, conning anti-Christian hatred that annotates the authorities and their henchmen.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Chairman HOYER. Thank you very much. We only have about 5, or 6 minutes left. Let me ask Father Mirchuk a couple of questions.

You indicate that the Soviets perceive the church as the major opponent, the major threat. Why do you believe that to be the case?

Father MIRCHUK. First of all, it's beyond the control of the Soviet Government in the fact that it's a Catholic Church.

Second of all, it is a peculiarly Ukrainian institution. In other words, it has always been a bulwark both against Russianization and Polandization because while we share the Catholic faith with the Poles, the Slovaks, the Germans, the French, we have a different right, we use a different language. We have different services. You know, our laws and everything are different, hence it would always keep us apart from any other nationality, even though the faith is the same.

In regards to the Russians, even though we have the same Slovak background, the line which would be as understandable as, for example, French is to an Italian or Spaniard even though we have the same right, our services are almost identical yet our Catholic faith separates us from a Russian. You know, or a Russian Orthodox believer. Hence, it is something that is specifically Ukrainian.

If they were to legalize the Ukrainian Catholic Church, first of all it would serve as a rallying point for anything Ukrainian. And today, of course, the Russian Government is trying to destroy the Ukrainian culture, the Ukrainian language, et cetera. By legalizing or by approving it, would just simply provide a rally point because many of these people who term themselves Ukrainians; would join the Ukrainian Catholic Church since by doing so they would manifest their opposition to the Soviet Government.

You know, the other part is that there is a very large Ukrainian Catholic exile community which is strongly anti-Communist, hence by legalizing they are afraid what effect the emigrating Ukrainian Catholic community might have on the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Ukraine.

Chairman HOYER. This is the last question I want to ask of you, Father, then I'm going to yield to Congressman Smith. How effec-

tive do you believe is the advocacy of the American church and of the American Government on behalf of churches and religious groups in Eastern Europe and how could it be more effective?

Father MIRCHUK. Well, if I could be a little bit political, I think that perhaps Americans do not advocate these rights as strongly as they can. As was mentioned by speakers before, if the American Government took a very staunch position, you know, "tit for tat," the Soviets would always budge. They will do things to you to see how far they can push you. Once you react, and depending on how you react, they will drawback.

If the American Government said as forcefully as it does, for example, in South Africa and other places that we are opposed to this, we will have no trade contest, we have no cultural exchange, the Soviet Government will change because especially for Gorbachev, it is essential that his media image of an open individual, of a leader of a new Soviet society be maintained. And if the Government were to put, all right, you are so open. How about this, how about that? And if you don't, we shall have to take these and these steps, we will see what his true face is. And I guarantee that in each and every instance if the American Government is forceful and will deny things that are essential to Soviet economy, they will give in.

I just do not believe the American Government has its heart in it. You know, the Helsinki Monitoring Committee of the Congress is a very welcomed step if it would have the whole hearted support of the American Government and especially of the foreign affairs part.

Chairman HOYER. Father, let me ask you to comment. I happened to see an interview with President Carter recently on ABC. He was probably as forceful a President on human rights internationally as we have ever had. He boycotted the Olympics, which was a very tough political issue for him in this country and, of course, imposed an embargo on wheat sales to the Soviet Union. Both of these actions were in response to the Afghan invasion by the Soviets.

This administration reversed the wheat embargo shortly after it came into authority and the Olympic boycott did not seem to measurably change things.

Now, both of those acts were dramatic acts to take, but did not seem to have a great effect. Would you comment on that? Do you think that observation is correct, incorrect, not enough?

Father MIRCHUK. I think that President Carter's stance did have an effect, because if you look at some of the documents that we have, some of the legislation, they did tend to ease up a bit. In other words, they didn't stop persecuting. But, for example, we have evidence from the Chronical of the underground Ukrainian Catholic Church that certain decrees were put out, for example, in the areas where Ukrainian Catholics formed a majority. Don't aggravate them. Don't confiscate Bibles, and don't arrest them for believing activities.

So I think that the American stance did have an effect on it. And once they cancelled it, we see to a certain degree, ever since President Reagan became the President and has changed his stance, we see an increase of persecution and, you know, blatant persecution, I

might add, of the Ukrainian Catholic Church and of other religions.

I think they're just seeing the fact that Americans are not consistent. They know that a certain policy will last as long as the given President is in office. Once he is out, the chance is that it will change and they have evidence—ample evidence of the fact that it does change.

So they just play their games slowly but surely while they are consistent, as was pointed out from 1917 to the present day. They have not changed in any way.

Chairman HOYER. Well, that was going to be my last question. But would you comment on that as it relates to the sanctions that were imposed against Poland in the last 4 years?

Ms. TERENCEW. As I said, I think in justifying the decision to lift the sanctions finally, President Reagan said he was—I think he mentioned that the first influence, the first opinion he took under this administration was the opinion of the Polish Episcopal as the moral opponent.

Now, in Poland, you wanted to comment on the efficiency or the—

Chairman HOYER. The effectiveness, yes.

Ms. TERENCEW. Effectiveness.

Chairman HOYER. One of the great debates, obviously, is that any time that action is taken using as an example, the wheat embargo, then the cost to the United States is higher than we are willing to pay. The cost of the wheat embargo was greater to the United States than it was to the Soviet Union and it didn't really markedly change Soviet actions and therefore wasn't worth the price. Now Father Mirchuk has indicated that he thinks there was change. However, the sanctions we asked others in the European theater to join us with respect to Poland were relatively unsuccessful, as you know.

Ms. TERENCEW. Yes, they were unsuccessful and, in fact, among Poles themselves the opinions were divided. Some people thought that well the sanctions were OK because the Government would be, in a way, the Polish Government would be in a way interfered with in its—it would be bad for the Government. Others thought that they didn't really matter.

I think there's a very depressed outlook on what's lying ahead for Poles in Poland and, as you know, the opposition circles themselves and the church itself changed their opinion—change their stand on whether sanctions should remain in place or whether they should be lifted.

From my personal point of view, I think the sanctions, if sanctions didn't help toward easing the burden on the Poles, but provided the Government with an additional argument it was a Pole joke, because Poles always joke. They joked that we're all right. There are no chickens because President Reagan ate their father. That's how the media tried to explain the terrible economic situation in Poland.

Well, you can't expect anything because the sanctions are in place. All the shortages were explained away by means of sanctions. People didn't believe it because they never believe the Government, but—

Chairman HOYER. I understand. Congressman Smith?

Representative SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I appreciate the testimony from all three of our witnesses.

Mrs. Wesnak, as the Chair had indicated, we were in Czechoslovakia just a few months ago and we had a very, I think, a very moving meeting with Cardinal Tomasek and he said several things, one of which was don't forget us. It seems that other Eastern bloc nations get more focus in the media and perhaps by Congress, and Czechoslovakia seems to be the forgotten country.

But he also—we got talking about the peace church, the—priests and the fact that apparently they are really carrying a lot of water for the regime. And we also got into the conversation concerning the Pope's potential visit. And maybe you can touch on—and for the record, really try to make it very clear that there are two sets of churches, the so-called peace church and that which is still loyal to the Vatican and, as a matter of fact, in my meeting with Mr. Hanchu earlier this week he said that they could probably go ahead and appoint bishops tomorrow providing they were the select peace church bishops and not the bishops that were independent of the Government.

Also, and I understand it was a Slovak initiative really to invite the Pope. Some 20-odd thousand petitions were gotten throughout the country and then it was abruptly halted and perhaps you can shed some light on what we can do to try to help facilitate that.

Mrs. WESNAK. Well, first of all, yes there are two very distinct churches in Slovakia and the priest movement, Pacem-in-Terris, very sneaky, OK? They have also within their midst, some of the official members of the church. They infiltrate the official church as well.

It's hard for the laymen, especially a traveler such as I, to differentiate between the two because there are some subtles between them.

As far as the signatures are concerned, they got many signatures? Yes, they did. The Pope has been trying very hard to get into Czechoslovakia on many different occasions. The request has come from within the country and at each time that he tries this, he is stymied because he is not allowed within the country (Cz-Sl).

As far as what can be done to help. The people there are very much aware that the United States is trying to help them. They realize that a lot of the help is going to make matters much worse for the people in Czechoslovakia before they get better. And the people are aware of that. But, as I said in my earlier statements, the young people are willing to take some of the risks that perhaps the older people were not. The problem in Czechoslovakia is that the people are enjoying to a great extent a kind of materialistic peace. They're not hungry. They're hungry for freedom, but perhaps not hungry enough. But the younger generation is very hungry for their freedom and especially for their freedom of religion.

The majority of the country is Christian. Probably 88 percent of it is Catholic. And within that group of people they are working very hard. They're very quiet. They have the underground church there. And they are doing things within their own homes. They are being persecuted for it, but they continue to do it. And I think it's

hopeful that these people themselves from within are taking a stance and they look to the American media for continued efforts on their behalf.

Representative SMITH. One final question or comment before I get to it. You mentioned the youth and the pride that you have in this next generation. Father Malley has that same view. He is the priest who lost his license because he signed Charter 77. He made the point to us that there's a spiritual thirst, a very profound spiritual thirst among the young people that coincides and parallels their thirst for freedom.

And the two working in tandem with additional leverage that perhaps the free countries could bring to bear, may at least lighten the situation for them so that they can enjoy greater freedom.

So Father Mirchuk, I get copies of the *Chronicals* through the mail and I've read portions of the books that have been sent me and they make very enlightening and disturbing reading. They focus on the kinds of difficulties the church encounters. Also there's a great deal of concern in Congress that those Eastern Europeans and those Soviet citizens who take it upon themselves to monitor the compliance with the Helsinki accords are then singled out by their regimes for unusually harsh punishment. This is so contrary to the spirit and letter of the Helsinki accords that it begs a loud protest on the part of our Commission and the part of our Congress and Government.

What can we do to help further a particular Helsinki monitoring group's visibility and to try to intercede on behalf of, perhaps, some of those who are suffering persecution now? How large is the group known as the Rights of Believers? Can you divulge any of that information? What can we do to help bring their case to light? To further light?

Father MIRCHUK. I think there's a couple of groups and because if a particular group is mainly interested in the religious rights of the Ukrainian—there was, of course, a Helsinki monitoring group separate from this.

Many of them do monitor some—I think one thing that the Government could do is perhaps intercede more for them. Within the last 2 years, nine Ukrainians have been released. I mean in comparison to 50 million Ukrainians who live within the Soviet Union, this is a very small portion and especially in comparison to those who languish in the prison.

Recently I have just found out—well, either way. At the beginning of May—was released to Canada and I understand now that—has been released and will be allowed to go to West Germany. But this is still 11 in comparison to the hundreds that are languished.

I think if the stand that Mr. Schifter took, which is very praiseworthy, but it just doesn't stop there. You know, one intercession, but this is constant intercession and constant mentioning.

I know there are lists of other people, but I think that the attention of the American Government should be equally divided to all groups. You can't single out a single group over the other group because everybody wants to get out. Nobody wants to stay, especially if you have medical reasons. Now, for example, we have Josyf Terelya who is very sick who has suffered much. Now, I understand the American Government does once in a while release—you

know, do exchanges for spies. Why cannot some of these Ukrainians—and the last group that was released, you know, there were five of them, only one was Ukrainian. We have such an individual who for 40 years has been in concentration camps and prisons simply because his father was the head of the Ukrainian underground. He's blind now. He's not allowed to return to the Ukraine. What exactly has he done for it? Nothing. He's a forgotten person.

I think that he is a crying example of everything that the Helsinki accords sought to prevent. A man who did nothing. His only crime is he's the son of his father. And I think that the American Government can do a lot by talking, by influencing, by meeting, by putting these people on the agenda.

Even if it's a symbolic stance, in the Soviet Union and in Soviet bloc countries, symbolism has a need. The very fact that the American Government didn't support the Germans in 1953, the Hungarians in 1956, the Czechoslovakians in 1968, the Poles in 1980, that has a lot of meaning. You know, we lost a lot of moral stamina or moral stance by our attitude of just letting the Soviets do whatever they want to do.

And I think that if the American Government, perhaps took a bit more hard line. I know I'm on the hawkish side, but still I think that that's the only way that the Soviet bear can be contained. And once it's contained, the world will know peace.

Representative SMITH. We have talked about psychiatric abuse, incarceration in gulags, forced labor. You mentioned the state kidnapping of children of believers. Could you touch on that problem of forcefully separating children from their parents because they're believers?

Father MIRCHUK. Well, this is a specialty applied to the various Protestant sects, the Pentecostals, the Baptists, the Jehovah's Witnesses, et cetera. You know, whereby they take them away and they put them in these orphanages to try to re-educate the children, to try to—as I said, get this moral force of having the children condemn their parents. And very often this is done over the radio then. By taking away the child, you also put pressure upon the parent to reconsider his mode of operation.

For example, Father Kostelnik who headed the group to reunite the Orthodox Church was pressured into this because of fear of his children. What was happening to his sons. He heard, in the next room, the cries of his sons as they were being tortured. And so this sort of broke him. And by taking the children away, they have hoped to, you know, influence the parents and change their stance.

I would like to point out the fact that at the 26th Party Congress a resolution was put out, for example, that special emphasis would be given to incarceration in psychiatric wards and a separate article in the resolutions mentioned that in every region of the Soviet Ukrainian Republic a section of the psychiatric hospital should be allocated to Ukrainian Catholics where two-thirds of those arrested should be incarcerated in the psychiatric hospitals so that they could be re-educated.

And that 250 beds should be placed everywhere, at the least, so that these people could be re-educated and then make a public statement that they have seen the error of their ways and then they can return "as useful citizens of the Soviet Union."

As was stated before, just in conclusion, it is a big mistake for American doctors, psychiatrists, and lawyers to think that they are dealing with people who think the way they are. The Soviets medical profession, legal profession, psychiatric profession is only out to further the aims of the Communist Party. They're mainly, stooges that are using the different areas to further the aims and their aims—I mean everything to everybody, is to conquer the world.

Representative SMITH. And that applies to co-religions?

Father MIRCHUK. Yes.

Representative SMITH. Thank you.

Chairman HOYER. I am constrained to make an observation. I see that Rabbi Feldman is still here. I understand what you have just said, but Koryagin was an official. Koryagin was there and he was appointed by the Soviet Government. And he changed. I believe people can change. We've stopped the testimony and this is a Chairman's prerogative, but I agree that one of the things we have to do is not be deluded in any way, nor be weakened in our resolve in any way. However, it seems to me that we ought not to discount the fact that there are Koryagins in the systems with which we deal.

My own experience as a human being has been that people change, and I've seen people change here politically that I deal with in the United States. Christ believed people could change. Christ believed that they could have experiences which would radically reverse their lives. Now, I don't think that that necessarily makes us naive or perhaps subject to being manipulated.

I wanted to make that observation because I'm not so sure that I share the views that have been expressed with respect to the interchanges that occur. Yes, I think that perhaps the overwhelming majority of people in the Soviet Union are committed to their system and perhaps blinded alternatives. But I think Rabbi Feldman, for instance, is a dramatic example as is Dr. Koryagin, that it's difficult to blind all people all the time and that there is a utility and a purpose to be served by attempting to reach out at least to those few who are susceptible to different ideas, to change.

I'm sorry that we don't have time to discuss this further. You'd like to respond and we don't have that time. And I apologize, but I did not want that to go by without at least stating that point of view.

I want to thank all of our witnesses for taking the time to be with us. You have brought to us a very broad spectrum of experience and information it has been very useful to us.

Let me add something, however. Father, you make a good point that we need to be adamant. You said hawkish, hard line, whatever, in our attitudes.

I want to say to those of you who are here that one of the purposes of the Commission visiting various cities is because everybody can't come to Washington and to demonstrate to the Congress and to the American public that this issue is politically an important issue in the United States. That is the position that Congressman Smith and I took in Czechoslovakia and it is the position I took in Hungary. It's the position I took with General Secretary Gorbachev, Mr. Schvardnadze, and others in Moscow. But it's important for us to demonstrate that, when we have hearings like this.

The witnesses have been compelling, in my opinion. But I would be less than candid if I did not admit to being a little disappointed, as I think you probably are that we don't have a large number of people here today in support of what all of us in this room believe is critically important.

Disappointed because the message it sends to Members of Congress is that perhaps there is not the constituency out there for this issue. Politicians and people are pretty much alike. They respond to what people are interested in.

One of the things, that we're going to do here in Philadelphia is visit with the papers. Congressman Smith and I are going to visit the editorial board. And we're going to emphasize the importance of human rights as an issue of American politics, domestically and internationally. We don't believe that the issue gets enough coverage. But if journalists and reporters believe a lot of people out there are concerned and interested, and demand that we pay attention to this as what all the witnesses have called for, then perhaps coverage will increase. If I were a Soviet agent sitting in this room, I would report back that the Commission came to Philadelphia and had a hearing and there were six witnesses who had compelling things to say, but there did not appear too much other interest.

What message does that send to the Soviets, the Czechoslovaks, or the Hungarians, or the Poles? The Poles and the Hungarians do relatively well on their own, as you've stated.

Now, this is not criticism of any individuals. I don't want anybody to take it as such. But it is a concern that I have as Chairman of the Commission that we need to energize, not just Pennsylvania, Maryland or New Jersey. We need to energize the country so that when a President stands up and says we're not going to go to the Olympics or we're not going to sell wheat, or we're not going to trade in technological goods, whatever the action might be that there is a broad base of support out there for that action. That is critical.

Again. I want to thank all of the witnesses for coming and all of you who have attended. The Commission will be working with you on behalf of the rights of individuals who, as each of you testified to, do in fact rely on us in the West and most particularly on the United States. We are the ones who deal on a one-on-one basis for the most part with the Soviets who obviously ultimately have control.

Thank you very much.

[The hearing was adjourned.]



APPENDIX A

TESTIMONY OF MR. DANIEL SEGAL,

PAST CHAIR

SOVIET JEWRY COUNCIL

JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL, PHILADELPHIA

My name is Daniel Segal and I am offering this written testimony as a representative of the Soviet Jewry Council of Philadelphia, having served from 1983 to 1986 as the Council's co-chair. The Council, an arm of Philadelphia's Jewish Community Relations Council, is an organization dedicated to securing basic human rights and freedoms for Jews in the Soviet Union, including the right to emigrate. Philadelphia's Soviet Jewry Council is a constituent member of the National Conference on Soviet Jewry, a major national organization dedicated to the cause of Soviet Jewry.

I would hope that the high level of activity engaged in by the Philadelphia Soviet Jewry Council puts it in a position of enhanced credibility at these hearings. In particular, the Philadelphia Council, perhaps more than any other local Soviet Jewry organization in the country, has maintained intensive day-to-day contact with the "refusenik" community in the Soviet Union. Apart from regular telephone calls and letters, a linchpin of the Council's activity is its successful encouragement of Philadelphians interested in the Soviet Jewry issue to travel to the Soviet Union to visit, support and exchange information with refuseniks. Literally hundreds of Philadelphians - - both Jewish and non-Jewish - - have traveled

to the Soviet Union for the sole goals of learning about the Soviet Jewry issue from the refuseniks themselves and assisting them in their heroic struggle. At virtually all times during the year, there is someone from Philadelphia visiting the Soviet Union with an exclusive focus on the Soviet Jewry issue. This constant contact with the Jewish community in the Soviet Union provides us in Philadelphia, I think, with a sensitive perspective on the Soviet Union's level of compliance with the Helsinki Final Act insofar as it impacts on Soviet Jews.

Our conviction is that, while there are perhaps some faint signs of hope on the horizon, the Soviet Union's treatment of Soviet Jews is ridden with oppression and its level of compliance with the Helsinki Final Act remains woefully inadequate.

Three areas merit special concern here:

1. Religious Freedom: Meaningful religious freedom does not exist for the Soviet Jewish community. With more than two million Jews in the Soviet Union, there are only a handful of synagogues. In Moscow, a city of 300,000 Jews, there is only one established synagogue. Perhaps more importantly, it is unquestioned that those synagogues which do exist operate under the thumb of the government, making any true religious experience in a synagogue context virtually impossible.

Participation in religious activities by Soviet Jews comes at a high cost. Such activities, they understand well, will severely compromise their chances of vocational and academic success. In that context, practising their religion means substantially compromising their future aspirations.

Even in these supposedly brady days of Soviet "glasnost", we have seen at some points during the past year a cracking down by Soviet authorities on Jewish religious teaching. For instance, a study group was disbanded by the authorities in Moscow. Threats are made against those involved or seeking to be involved in religious study, sending yet again the clear message that Jewish religious observance and teaching are incompatible with an individual's progress in Soviet society.

2. Jewish Culture: Jewish culture is rich and varied; ironically, a substantial part of its development occurred in Russia. Tragically, today, even in the "glasnost" atmosphere, the culture of the Jewish people, far from being fostered, is being suppressed by the Soviet authorities.

In recent years, Soviet Jews went through a period in which at regular intervals, Hebrew teachers were arrested and imprisoned. Charges varied from "engaging in anti-Soviet activities" to fabricated allegations of "trafficking in drugs". Long prison sentences were common. Particularly given

the centrality of the Hebrew language to Jewish culture, the governmental message was clear that the teaching and development of Jewish culture was not to be tolerated.

It is true that, at least for the time being, arrests of Hebrew teachers have ceased and, with one exception, those who were arrested have been released. However, these developments have not eliminated the constancy of oppression; those involved in cultural endeavors are regularly warned by authorities, harassed by governmental officials and discriminated against in academic and vocational settings. Even with the ceasing of the arrests, there remains a continuous pattern of oppression; a veritable "sword of Damocles" hangs over anyone -- adult or child -- who seeks to become involved in Jewish cultural activities. Moreover, the refuseniks feel that the arrests could begin again at any time. Thus, it is only the courage of the refuseniks in the face of major hurdles that allows continued attention to Jewish culture by Soviet Jews.

3. Emigration: Freedom of movement is among the most basic of human rights. Yet it is a right denied on a wholesale scale to the Soviet Jewish community. Approximately 400,000 Jews now in the Soviet Union have sought to leave. Yet, for no legitimate reason, their emigration has been severely restricted by Soviet authorities. Divided families are denied the right to

be reunited. Jews who wish to emigrate to Israel, their historic homeland, are denied the right to repatriation. Individuals who have decided that they cannot live their lives as people and as Jews in the Soviet Union are barred from seeking to live elsewhere.

Among the most tragic situations are those of the long term refuseniks. There remain languishing in the Soviet Union many families who have been refuseniks for over 10 years. Their names - - Slepak, Begun, Nudel and others - - should be familiar to all those concerned with human rights. No meaningful reason is given for refusing them the right to emigrate. Many teenagers have literally lived their whole lives as refuseniks, discriminated against by Soviet society, yet denied the right to leave that society. It would be a tragedy if the small increase in emigration in recent months blinds us to the plight of the thousands who are still denied this basic human right.

In sum, we in the Philadelphia Soviet Jewry Council, committed to the Helsinki Final Act, are distressed that the Soviets have not lived up to their obligations as signatories to that document. We urge the American government and the governments of the other signatories to do everything they can to pressure the Soviets to comply with their obligations and to grant true freedom to Soviet Jews.

APPENDIX B

Testimony of Justine Wesnak given on May 29, 1987 at Helsinki Commission's
Philadelphia field hearing on Religious Intolerance in the Soviet Union.

Distinguished Commissioners and guests:

I am pleased to have this opportunity to testify in your presence on the subject of Religious Intolerance especially as it effects my Slovak brothers and sisters living in the Slovak Socialist Republic in Czechoslovakia.

Personally I welcome every opportunity to promote an awareness of the lack of freedom and self-determination of the people of Slovakia.

My testimony today re the past, present and possible future religious oppression of my fellow Slovaks living behind the iron curtain comes, to some degree from the conversations I had with many Slovaks during my visit to Slovakia in 1985. General information comes from and can be substantiated in the materials I will submit with the written testimony the time to which I am limited here does not allow.

As most of you know Slovakia is the smallest country in Central Europe, therefore its inhabitants have always been exploited by its larger neighbors. Located in the Eastern region of Czechoslovakia it is bordered on the North by Poland, South by Austria and Hungary and West by the Czech Socialist Republic and on the East by the Soviet Union.

Slovak people, always known for their hard work and spirituality, have survived thousands of years of oppression of one form or another and they have continually progressed since their Christianization in the early ninth century. In the early 1900's they were an uneducated nation of farmers, today they are an industrialized nation of highly educated people with internationally renowned universities and research centers to their credit.

Despite the fact that Slovakia is at the crossroads of central Europe our people have managed to preserve their own Culture and National identity. Their struggle today is for self-determination and freedom, including the freedom of religion. The culture of the Slovak people is directly linked with its religion. Historically, the local clergy rather than any state officials have been the recognized leaders of our people, consequently it is understandable that the communist regime considers the Church, especially in

Slovakia, its main enemy and therefore spares no efforts in trying to destroy the formal church and thus to crush the spirit of our people.

Since February 1948 Slovakia has remained a communist state enduring constant religious persecution. There was a short lived period free of persecution during the leadership of Dubcek in the spring of 1968 when Czechoslovakia became a Federal State consisting of two Socialistic Republics one Czech and one Slovak.

There has been no let up in the communist persecution of Christians since the Russian invasion of Czechoslovakia on August 21st 1968. That persecution has been demonstrated in acts ranging from harassment to exile of hundreds of religious and in 1981 the most brutal murder of a priest heard of outside of prison walls (it was of course never proven that Rev. Coufal was murdered).

The year 1975 was one of historical importance in Slovakia. In the spring several zealous priests suffered assassination attempts. The attempt on the life of Rev. Dr. Jan Cierny succeeded.

I'm sure that all present today are especially interested in what results the Helsinki Conference of 1975 had on religious persecutions in Slovakia. The conclusion of that Conference marked a further deterioration in the conditions facing the Church there. The Party was provoked to new atrocities against Christians and their priests in Slovakia in their determination to convince them that the final acts of the Helsinki Accords would not induce the government to allow greater pastoral activity. The secret police interrogated hundreds of priests, threatening and intimidating them in various ways using isolation, bullying, public humiliation, and even physical violence. The national press printed the provisions of the Helsinki Accords, but this stopped after the citizens began to appeal for their enforcement. As far as Slovakia was concerned; except for the brief respite the Church enjoyed before the conference; the Helsinki "detente" never penetrated the nation's borders.

Pacem-in-Terris is named for Pope John XXIII's encyclical which translates as peace on earth. It is a priest peace movement sponsored by the communist government in defiance of the Vatican. The priests involved in this movement are for the most part puppets of the communists regime whose purpose is to come

between the faithful and their trusted religious leaders.

In 1975 this peace movement held an October convention at which the Deputy Chairman of the Communist National Front, *Thomas Trajnick* dared to say openly before assembled priests that the government's aim is a total liquidation of the Church and of religion. A delayed reply came in the third of a series of the underground pamphlets published for the first time in 1975 and later known as the "Slovak Catholic Samizdat" which stated, "It is astonishing. Communists declare without hesitation that Marxism and religion are incompatible opposites, yet if a priest or any Christian were to claim that Christianity is contrary to Marxism, he would be accused and sentenced for counter-revolutionary agitation."

As further proof of the ongoing attempt of the communist to destroy the Church in Slovakia I offer you these facts. Before the communist take over there were 10 catholic seminaries, now there are two, one for the Czech lands and one for Slovakia. The number of candidates is severely limited and all applicants must be approved by the government.

Of the 13 Catholic dioceses only 3 are still headed by resident bishops, one of whom is Cardinal Tomasek who is 88 years of age with the others over 70. Several dioceses have not had a bishop for over 30 years.

The Catholic press is severely limited, with one Czech and one Slovak paper. In 1985 when Archbishop Jozef Tomko became the first Slovak Cardinal in this century his appointment was never mentioned in the Catholic press there.

Also in 1985 when the Czechs and Slovaks celebrated the 1100 anniversary of the death of St. Methodius Pope John Paul II who wanted to participate in the festivities was denied entrance by the Prague regime.

In 1986 when exiled Slovak Bishop Paul Hnilica, S.J.'s mother died, after pleading with the Prague government including a public plea from Pope John Paul II in Rome a visa was denied the bishop to attend his mother's funeral.

A well known Slovak American Bishop Andrew Grutka of Gary Indiana was continually denied a visa since 1969, in September of 1986 he was finally granted a restricted visa which permitted him to travel in Czechoslovakia only as a lay person. He was denied the right to celebrate mass publicly.

Bishop John Korec, S.J. who was secretly ordained a Bishop, has not been able to function in priestly ministry, he is a common laborer in Bratislava where he has lived for more than 20 years. Last year, in 1986 Notre Dame University awarded him an Honorary Doctorate, the Czechoslovak government refused to let him travel to the U.S. to receive this award. He is a witness to the continued violation of the right to worship guaranteed by the Czechoslovak constitution.

An announcement was made in Austria that Father Hanus, an 80 year old priest was found guilty of hearing confessions. His trial took place in northern Slovakia on March 10th this year.

Vatican radio announced in April 1987 that a priest in Slovakia was sentenced to jail for celebrating Mass in a private home. Father Javorsky was previously convicted and sentenced in 1975 and 1981.

Yes the Church in Slovakia is badly wounded but it still lives. As a leader of Slovak youth on a national and international level I am extremely proud of the youth of Slovakia who have truly "come of age". They are a generation that is not afraid to express their faith, regardless of the threat of not being allowed to continue their education and that their future as a whole might be at risk if they persist in religious activities. Attendance at the religious pilgrimages which began in 1975 has increased. 1984 will be known as the year of massive religious demonstrations in Sastin and Levoca. Conservative estimates number the believers attending the feast at Marian Hill in Levoca, most of them young people, at 150,000. The pilgrimage was not haphazard, it was a well planned major feast of the faith and testimony to the very strong faith of those who risked the threatened consequences to attend.

In the words of the Rev. Anton Hlinka, noted Slovak author who works in Munich with Voice of America and assists the Slovak community throughout western Europe and the gentleman from whom much of my information comes, "The Christian idealism that inspires many determined men and women outweighs the evil, cunning, anti-Christian hatred that animates the authorities and their henchmen." Thank you for your kind attention.

Helsinki Commission's Philadelphia field hearing on Religious Intolerance in the Soviet Union.

Written Testimony of Justine Wesnak, of Whitehall, PA in the Congressional District of Congressman Don Ritter, given on May 29, 1987, Philadelphia, PA
Distinguished Commissioners:

General information for my oral presentation today can, for the most part ~~can~~ be substantiated in the following formal sources:

- 1) a series of excerpts published weekly from December 24, 1986 and as yet not completed have been appearing in the Jednota (a Catholic Fraternal Weekly printed in Middletown, PA) from the as yet unpublished book by Anton Hlinka entitled "The Power of the Weak and the Weakness of the Power." This book is a history of Slovakia's heroic struggle to preserve the faith from the time of its Christianization to present day. Unfortunately there wasn't sufficient time for me to assemble unmarked copies of the articles as they appeared, however they can be made available to you upon request.

The author, Rev. Anton Hlinka, Ph.D. is a Salesian missionary who works in Munich with Voice of America and assists the Slovak community throughout western Europe.

- 2) The articles of Z. Michael Szaz which have appeared in the Washington Times, Chicago Tribune and the New York Tribune in 1983 and 1984. As foot-noted in the articles, Mr. Szaz is a Washington based foreign policy commentator who is a specialist in Eastern European affairs and former professor of international relations. I am submitting a copy of Mr. Szaz's articles as a further part of my testimony.

Thank you for affording me with the opportunity to testify on behalf of my fellow Slovaks living in oppression in the Slovak Socialist Republic.

Czech regime hikes religious persecution

Communist regimes pay lip service to religious freedom. They pride themselves in East-Central Europe on paying a part-time salary to the Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant clergy, a custom dating back centuries in these countries.

The reality, however, is different. In every communist country, religious denominations have to be "licensed" by the state, and priests and ministers have to take a loyalty oath to the "socialist" state. The paltry salaries provided by the state are used to manipulate the clergy's freedom of expression administratively. Those who preach pious platitudes and fail to proselytize among the young are rewarded with plum parish assignments; those who resist wind up in a godforsaken village or in jail.

Even this state of affairs applies only in Poland or Hungary. In Romania, distributing Bibles or prayer books printed abroad is a punishable crime, and unlicensed Protestant ministers and Greek Uniate priests are sentenced to long prison terms.

Worst offender

But the worst offender against the freedom of religion (outside the Soviet Union) remains the

Their main objective is to inform on the believers and spread disinformation and provocations among them.

Prague regime, which has been buttressed by the occupying Red Army since 1968. There has not been any of the relaxation that made life bearable in Hungary

Z. Michael Stasz is a Washington-based foreign policy commentator.

after the bloody communist revenge between 1957 and 1962.

Rather, persecution of the Roman Catholic Church is intensifying. Catholicism is the main religion in Czechoslovakia, but the resilience of the church in the Czech lands is not as strong as in Slovakia. The reason is that the church lost many followers for its past identification with the Hapsburgs in Bohemia and Moravia.

Historically, the Slovak priest of the village, or the parish priest in the town, was more the leader of the community than was any state official. The unity of the faithful and the clergy constitutes the biggest obstacle to Marxism-Leninism among the 4 million Slovaks.

Still, we hear almost nothing about them in the Western media. Many of the signers of Charta '77 were Slovaks and most of the religious resisters come from Slovakia. Two members of the Catholic lay apostolate were sentenced to jail in Bratislava (capital of Slovakia) recently for preaching Catholic ideas and distributing Catholic literature, while outside the courthouse demonstrators were saying the rosary aloud.

Twenty former Franciscan priests and brothers were recently arrested by the secret police and are being "interrogated."

Drugged and beaten

The West German Catholic News Service reports that the secret police are using both physical beatings and psychedelic drugs served in coffee to extort confessions from believers.

The secret police, with substantial Soviet assistance, also are organizing their own "task force" among university students, who are being bribed with money, guaranteed degrees or jobs to infiltrate Catholic youth circles. These agents provocateurs receive training in church attendance and doctrine. Their main objective is to inform on the believers and spread disinformation and provocations among them.

One of the primary tasks is to find out how the news of religious persecution is leaked to the West. The secondary objective is to

gauge religious activities so the secret police can take effective countermeasures.

The regime considers the Catholic Church, especially in Slovakia, its main enemy. Many of the bishoprics in Slovakia have not been filled since the late 1940s and church autonomy is a thing of the past. Yet outside of the intimidated clergy, lay people are taking over and providing support for those priests who persist in preaching the true Gospel.

Still, our media seem more interested in human rights "violations" amid a bloody civil war in El Salvador than about these violations of religious and human freedoms in Czechoslovakia.

Behind the times

Our State Department also seems behind the times with regard to Czechoslovakia. While Czechs and Slovaks have lived under a common roof since 1920, their geography, history and culture are quite different. (They lived for almost 1,000 years in the kingdom of Hungary).

The regime considers the Catholic Church, especially in Slovakia, its main enemy.

There are 2 million American citizens of Slovak heritage — those who immigrated between 1939 and 1980 and their children. But the State Department still advises against presidential greetings to the conventions of any American Slovak organizations because "in doing so we would promote Slovak separatism."

Yet presidential greetings and invitations to State Department briefings are given routinely to the national organizations of almost every other ethnic group, including those, like the Ukrainians, who do not have a sovereign state of their own.

Thus, such recognition would not mean we are for an independent Slovakia, but rather would be a gesture toward the proud Slovak people who so grievously suffer for their belief in God and human freedom.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Czechoslovakian churches under renewed persecution

However, no Communist country in Europe except the Soviet Union has progressed as far as Ireland in allowing by law the business of brewers, a part of the struggle against the Catholic hierarchy. Through the price controls, the Irish government has driven a wedge between the clergy and the laity, and continues to restrict the clergy to mainly pastoral activities.

That sort of fear led to the resurgence of the unpopular and discredited "Pacem in terris" peace priest movement among the Catholic clergy members of which were selected by the communist government. In 1968, these peace priest's disappeared like snow melting in the spring, and for six months church life was barren as fear was removed as the ultimate weapon by the Dubcek government.

In Czechoslovakia, being religious outside the rectory is a parishable offence, and this reduces contacts between the clergy and the faithful to a minimum. In order to deepen the distrust between the laity and the priests, and thus to

"Besides the usual communist tactics of harassment, police visits, house searches and putting the surviving worker priests under surveillance and sending them to far-away areas, the regime is concentrating upon the destruction of the churches as institutions."

However, the appointment of race priests as administrators of the least desirable and most stigmatized and compromising the clergy is only one aspect of the regime's

Outright prejudice is practiced by the regime legally and extra-legally and the rights of Christians to a free conscience, press, association and education are denied as systematically as to the blacks in South Africa.

Hospital staffs are under extreme pressure to remove their faith friends quickly as it is sudden to bring the social and extreme union to the dining in hospitals, and the remaining brothers and sisters are transported in 1976 and 1977 to "concentration camps" where they live under harsh conditions isolated from the population. One hundred of them, Francis, were arrested this spring.

magazines, except for a few satirical weeklies and monthlies. Religious literature is categorized as "anti-socialist". The importation of religious books is a punishable crime, and border guards who confiscate about a ton of Bibles and tra-

Still, the magazine, the end is not the beginning. We must create our own magazine, a respected Social Justice. They don't beat us any more. They just let us die of suffocation as but for by bit they reduce our life's future elements.

Fifteen years after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, we must note the cry for help emanating from the persecuted Christians of the East and of Western culture. The Czechs, Slovaks and other Catholic, Protestant and Jewish Christians, who had been persecuted by the very all Christian people of Central and Eastern Europe, must be recognized as our people, who have religious freedom for all Christians, religious freedom for all Christians, and we must be satisfied with it.

Perspective

A forum—ideas, analysis, opinion

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Chicago Tribune, Tuesday, January 17, 1984

The plight of Czech churches

By Z. Michael Szaz

With the possible exception of Poland, where the Catholic Church remains an independent force, Christian churches are restricted or persecuted throughout Warsaw Pact nations.

However, no communist country in Europe except the Soviet Union has progressed as far as Czechoslovakia in turning, by forcible means or bribery, a part of the clergy against the Catholic hierarchy. Through the "peace priests," the Czech government has driven a wedge between the clergy and the faithful, and continues to restrict the clergy to mere ritual contact with further ministerial contacts with the believers.

Communist methods perfected in the days of Gottwald and Novotny are being reapplied with unprecedented vigor by the appointees of the puppet regime of Gustav Husak.

The situation of the churches has deteriorated in the atmosphere of fear which pervades all spheres of life. Czech philosopher Vaclav Havel has put it vividly: "Beset by fear, the instructor will teach what he does not really believe. The same sense of fear compels the pupil dutifully to parrot what is being taught. Driven by fear, individuals join organizations, attend meetings, outwardly approve whatever they are supposed to approve."

This sort of fear led to the resurgence of the unpopular and discredited Pacem in terra priest movement among the Catholic clergy, members of which were selected by the communist government.

Besides the usual communist tactics of harassment, police visits, house searches, surveillance of worker priests and their removal to faraway areas, the regime is concentrating upon destroying the church as an institution. The attacks include the assistance of intimidated priests or those clerics who can be bribed to oppose the hierarchy.

In Czechoslovakia, teaching religion outside the rectory is a punishable offense. This reduces contacts between the clergy and the faithful to a minimum. In order to deepen the distrust between the faithful and priests and ministers, religious personnel are impli-

cated in various forms of alleged collaboration with the secret police.

Clergymen, in turn, are intimidated by the threat of withdrawal of their licenses for ecclesiastical activity. In Czechoslovakia, even religious personnel are paid by the state. Noncompliance results in arrests and jail, or at least in increased harassment.

Religious education has been almost obliterated in the urban areas, even though, as recently as a decade or so ago, 70 percent of the children in Slovakia still received religious instruction. The regime is discriminating against Christians in jobs, housing and education. Mass expulsions of church-going youngsters from high schools have taken place and some youths have been refused apprenticeships. In many instances, punitive steps are taken against parents who confess their faith.

In addition to outright discrimination, the regime is unique—outside of the Soviet Union—in employing "enlightened" youths, either programmed atheists or students bribed with the promise of jobs and scholarships, to infiltrate Christian youth circles and denounce their members to the secret police, or to attend church services and take down the names and license plate numbers of the faithful. Teachers are instructed to determine the religious knowledge of children as young as first-graders to prove that they receive instruction at home.

In the meantime, the regime negotiates with the Vatican periodically about filling the vacant dioceses. But the talks are fruitless, despite the intention of the Vatican to accept compromise candidates. The persecution of young Christians who are forming informal circles to further their religious education continues.

Still, the regime does not want to create too many martyrs. To quote a respected Slovak scholar: "They don't beat us anymore. . . . They just let us die of suffocation as, bit by bit, they reduce our life's finer achievements."

Almost 16 years after the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, we must note the cry emanating from the persecuted Christians of that land of Western culture. The cry is not restricted to Slovak Catholics. Protestants also are being persecuted. The cry of all Christian people in Czechoslovakia must be communicated to our people who take religious freedom for granted. Can we afford to be indifferent to their fate?

Z. Michael Szaz is a former professor of international relations.

APPENDIX C

Margot Terentiew

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN POLAND

A Report to the U.S. Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe

Roman Catholicism is a predominant religion in Poland with Orthodox Christians, Protestants, Jews, Moslems, and other denominations making up a negligible percentage of the population. The current edition of the Great Polish Encyclopaedia (*Wielka Encyklopedia Powszechna PWN*) does not list religious denominations by population percentages, and the latest breakdown by numbers available in that publication refers to the period of the early 1900's, when Roman Catholics made up over 62 percent of the population.

The position of the Catholic Church in pre-war Poland was guaranteed by the Constitution of 1921, which gave Roman Catholicism a privileged role by granting the Roman Catholic Church a leading position among all the other churches, otherwise referred to as having equal rights. The Concordat of February 10, 1925, granted the Holy See the right to nominate bishops, and to enjoy a full range of freedoms and legal protection in conducting all religious activities, as well as the right to influence the education of young people. The Concordat was revoked on September 12, 1945, by Poland's newly installed Communist authorities in connection with the Vatican's pro-German policies during World War II, including nomination of German bishops in several Polish dioceses in violation of the Concordat terms.

The present situation of the Roman Catholic Church in Poland is based on the 1950 Agreement Between the Polish Episcopate and the Government of the Polish People's Republic, amended in 1956, and on the Constitution of

1952, which, in Article 70, provides for a complete separation of the Church and State, while granting citizens full freedom of religious observances and expression.

It is on rare, indeed unique, occasions that Poland's position among the other Eastern European countries is not referred to as unique. This is a country in which, unlike in other countries of the bloc, much of the farming land -- according to some estimates as much as 80 percent -- is in private hands, political dissent is tolerated, and religious practices are hardly restricted. These three factors must be taken into consideration when discussing religious freedoms -- or intolerance -- in Poland. None of them however can be left without qualifications.

Church-State Relationship Following the Communist Takeover in Poland

It is now a platitude to speak of the role of the Catholic Church in Poland in preserving anti-Communist attitudes in this country. Mention of the estimated eighty percent of farming land in private hands calls for the immediate granting of credit to the late primate of Poland, Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, and the rest of the episcopate who, in their dealings with the Communist regime of the late Forties and the early Fifties, managed to command authority with, and maintain respect of, the majority of the Polish people. The Church demonstrated such moral power that, despite applying prolonged persecutions to members of the Church hierarchy, including several years' detention of the primate himself, the Communist regime had to give up one of its basic tenets, i.e. the collectivization of land. Not only was land collectivization abandoned but, for a brief period of time, the teaching of religion in schools was permitted.

Throughout the earlier Stalinist period in Poland private religious practice was discouraged through state propaganda methods and occasional harassment, but it was outrightly banned and punished only with regard to members of the *nomenklatura*, i.e. members of the Communist party and those who, despite formal non-affiliation, held positions of authority in the ruling apparatus.

There seem to have been two basic methods of destroying the influence of the church within the society. One is to undercut and subvert the allegiance and confidence of the faithful in the clergy and hierarchy through propaganda and the threat of economic and administrative reprisals. That method was applied dutifully in the early Fifties, and there are ample published reports as well as personal testimonies to the fact. The general feeling of uneasiness, to say the least, about attending church services was reflected in the fact that, as my parents and their friends would testify, it was considered unsafe for one's job security and well-being to speak of or encourage going to church on Sunday in public.

The other method of suppressing religious expression is to put pressure on the clergy and the hierarchy themselves, as well as on the activist laity, to cut jurisdictional ties with the Vatican, and to make the Church "national and independent", thus subject to control by the Communist regime. With this objective in mind the PAX Society was established in Poland in 1945. The society officially included Catholic laity reconciled to the idea of socialism in Poland and even actively cooperating in that seemingly impossible task. Until recently the group had its representation in the Polish parliament — Sejm, and it is still allowed a considerable measure of freedom in its social and economic activity. Along the same lines of reconciling the Catholic religion with the Marxist ideology, the so-called "patriot priests" were

encouraged to perform pastoral duties independently of the Vatican's orders.

Regardless of such relatively subtle pressures and manipulations on the part of the government throughout the Sixties and the Seventies religious freedom in the form of unrestricted basic religious practices were allowed, even though, most often unbeknownst to the faithful, the church hierarchy was involved in administrative tug-of-war with the government, particularly at the local level. Some outward manifestation of a deeper political conflict became visible in the mid-Sixties when the Polish bishops sent a reconciliatory message to their German counterparts, which was regarded by the government as an attempt at conducting their own foreign policy.

Religious Freedom in Poland Today

I have heard of or known nobody in Poland persecuted for practising their religion. I have had no first-hand observations of this kind, at least not with regard to exercising an individual's right to strictly religious expression. As has been mentioned, Poland is predominantly Catholic and the Catholic rituals are performed freely. Most children are christened and go to their first Holy Communion, if that is their parents' wish. Both occasions are considered extremely important events in a person's life and are highly celebrated as such. With the obvious exception of Communist party members, many of whom practise religion either secretly or at least inconspicuously, everybody can attend Mass. Holy Mass is said in church every Sunday and on all church holidays without any restriction on the part of the state or local authorities. Churches are open daily and nobody is persecuted or harassed for attending them. Church marriages and funerals are permitted without restriction, although a church marriage is not legally binding.

Although the teaching of religion in schools is no longer allowed under the constitutional principle of separation of the church and state, the teaching of religion on church premises is not interfered with in any way. Insofar as atheism is promoted by means of school curricula, it may be said to oust or replace religious belief, but outside school the faithful of any denomination may arrange for their children's or their own religious instruction. In addition to a single religious high school run by Catholic nuns at Szymanow, 30 miles west of Warsaw, there is an academic institution of international renown, the Catholic University of Lublin KUL, established in 1918, which is permitted to function without any restriction or interference. In fact KUL provides a haven for many scientists and scholars just barely declaring adherence to the Catholic faith, who, for political reasons, are unable to work at other universities.

Another haven for fired intellectuals declaring Catholic affiliation without outwardly practising religion, is the Catholic weekly Tygodnik Powszechny. It is one of the few magazines allowed to mark clearly all censorship suppressions, and it does so in a very blatant way thus drawing readers' attention and saying, between the lines, more than it is allowed to say. Unlike strictly opposition, underground publications Tygodnik Powszechny is formally considered an official magazine, and despite frequent censors' interventions, enjoys a measure of editorial freedom not accorded to other above-ground publications.

Non-Catholic Religions

Non-Catholic believers are also allowed to practise their religion, although religious practices are not encouraged as part of the general policy of promoting atheism, an element of the official materialist ideology.

Much has been said in the context of religious freedom about the 1968 expulsion of Jews from Poland. Following student unrest at the University of Warsaw in March of that year, blame for instigating young people to rebel against the authorities was put on the loosely defined "Zionists". Consequently, the majority of Jews holding executive positions were fired from their jobs and thus forced to leave the country. However, the process had no religious undertones and was an exclusively political affair related to a change in Poland's policy towards Israel. The authorities were very careful to stress the alleged Zionism or anti-Polishness of those persecuted in the wake of the March 1968 events, i.e. their political orientation rather than their religious beliefs.

Since then the practice of Judaism in Poland has been neither encouraged nor actively discouraged, although the dwindling number of Jews, currently estimated at two to five thousand, mostly elderly people, has resulted in the closing of most synagogues and cessation of almost all Judaic rituals. At present just two synagogues are open in Cracow, but the current political trend towards reconciliation with Israel, no doubt initiated at the Kremlin, has led to certain overtures in this field. Also, the government's frantic efforts to placate the Jewish American community in the hope of improving trade contacts with the United States has resulted in renewed interest of Jewish Americans in visiting Poland. Two years ago the first bar mitzvah in years took place in Cracow and a number of Polish-Jewish seminars have been held to discuss the ever-recurring problem of alleged Polish anti-Semitism, notably the two seminars last fall, co-sponsored by Poland's primate, Józef Cardinal Glemp, and Cardinal Franciszek Macharski of Cracow, together with the B'nai B'rith Anti-Defamation League.

The attitude of reconciliation is also reflected in the Polish government's current stand on the Jewish Holocaust, as demonstrated by the support for the

Anti-Defamation League's recent appeal to declassify the United Nations' files on Nazi criminals.

Religious practices of other denominations are tolerated in Poland in the strictest sense of the word, i.e. neither persecuted nor helped to thrive. Religious objects such as temples and works of religious art of the relatively few Orthodox Christians, Moslems, Protestants are left totally in the care of respective religious communities. However, conscientious objectors citing religious beliefs, such as Pentecostals, are prosecuted.

M. Terentiew

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IN POLAND

continued

Religious Freedom as a Political Issue

Church in Poland is said to be highly politicized. Indeed, particularly in recent years, the political clout of the Polish Catholic Church has manifested itself quite clearly. In lifting economic sanctions against General Wojciech Jaruzelski's regime, imposed for suppressing Solidarity, the United States based its decision not only on the opinions of Poland's opposition leaders and those of the Polish American Congress, but also, in fact primarily, on the position taken by the Polish Episcopate and Primate Glomp. General Jaruzelski had to seek the Church's recommendation, beside that of the Italian government, to be received in the Vatican.

Another telling example of the Church taking on a political role came recently when an organization called Freedom and Peace held an international seminar at the premises of a church in Warsaw. Now the Freedom and Peace group was established a few years ago to protect conscientious objectors who refused military service under the oath of allegiance to the Soviet Union, but it has since evolved into a major pacifist organization dealing, among other issues, with environment protection. The group is illegal in Poland.

It is at this point that human rights expressed in religious freedoms begin to clash in Poland with the civil rights as granted, or rather denied, to the Polish people by its Communist rulers. It is also at this point that the role of the Polish Church as the preserver of human rights manifests itself in a prominent way. As has been pointed out, Poland is the country in which

people can exercise their right to practise religion freely -- as long as the definition of what constitutes religious practice is set forth by the government, and as long as the religious community stays within the limits of that definition.

The Helsinki Accords provide a mechanism for assisting the Church in assessing in moral terms the political realities of a country by spelling out the human rights which the signatories have consented to observe. The June 1985 Conference of Catholic Bishops in Poland stated that the Church had an obligation to defend civil and human rights, protect human dignity, and render moral judgement on political affairs. During his visit to Chile earlier this year Pope John Paul II said clearly that while democracy was not in itself the aim of Catholic teaching, insofar as it promoted human rights and human dignity it was naturally preferable to the Vatican to the oppressive regimes that may otherwise declare themselves "God-fearing" or just religious. The position of the Polish Catholic Church is based on the assumption of this very right and obligation to judge political reality in the country without aspiring to become a political power sensu stricto.

The Church is not a monolithic organization and while the Primate, informed by his diplomatic contacts with representatives of the government and instructed by the Pope, may discourage openly political pronouncements from the pulpit, the clergy, remaining in closer touch with their poverty-stricken parishioners, and themselves bearing the burden of Poland's economic crisis, may not exercise caution and proper restraint, and tend to voice their parishioners' dissatisfaction with the system. It is now common knowledge, in fact a one-sided interpretation, that the Rev. Jerzy Popiełuszko was murdered in October 1984 for openly voicing his political opinions which the government termed subversive and thus explained, if not condoned, the murder itself.

There is no doubt in my mind that the death of Popieluszko was an accident, not a deed ordered by the four perpetrators' supervisors in the Ministry of Internal Affairs or the equivalent department in the Party's Central Committee. The murderers were duly brought to trial. According to Attorney Wladyslaw Sila-Nowicki, a respected and competent lawyer who visited the United States last year, the accused were tried and sentenced in accordance with the strictest provisions of the law. Yet, the sentences of the three of them were considerably shortened by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, ironically as the country was commemorating the second anniversary of the murder.

Thus the government claimed and confirmed for itself the right to discriminate between religious freedom which many think the Rev. Popieluszko was exercising on behalf of his parishioners, from his political obligation as a citizen to keep quiet about oppression disguised as raison d'etat.

(The misconstrued regard for observing raison d'etat lies at the root of most violations of civil rights in Poland, the most obvious of which is denying ~~citizens~~ authentic political representation and active participation in the government to those citizens who lack the approval of the Communist apparatus.) That the murderers of Popieluszko were brought to trial at all was regarded by many Poles as a "sign of liberalization". A sorry liberalization indeed! Yet, citizens of other countries of the bloc envy Poles even that, stressing Poland's "unique" position.

Conclusion

It is not the inherent characteristics of Poland's current political system that account for the present — liberalized — state of affairs with respect to either religious freedoms or, broadly, human rights. On the contrary, it is the inefficiencies of the Communist rule in general and the weaknesses

of the system as applied to this particular, deeply religious people, that have contributed to Poland's unique situation. In other words, Poland's relative freedom has originated outside her political system. Precisely, in opposition to it. The Church, having taken a stand with the people against the foreign oppression, has forced the authorities to liberalize. The Church has raised human rights and made the government see the connection between the necessity to let go of the people at least just a little, and a chance to be received and talked to by the world.

In this respect it can be argued that the current liberalization in Poland is unlike the glasnost in the Soviet Union, where moves toward a more liberal treatment of citizens by the government appear to be a conscious, pragmatic choice in the face of the imminent threat to the system upon which that country is based. In Poland, on the other hand, liberalization procedures have been instituted against the will of members of the ruling apparatus. The Government must reckon with the Church in Poland. In the Soviet Union -- it needn't. In the Soviet Union, for historical reasons, the subjugation of the Church has resulted from the traditional perception of church and state as a dual power. In Poland, if the government were to feel that it no longer has to talk to the church, it would attempt to fight against the church not by political means but by physical oppression and reprisals.

This appears true regardless of reported infighting among factions which are said to exist and launch mutual hostilities within the apparatus, be it in Poland or the Soviet Union. For a man in the street, going to church to attend Sunday mass, the infighting has no relevance, for to him the supposed opponents within the ruling authority turn a uniformly hostile face.

New York, May 28, 1987

APPENDIX D



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APPEAL TO BELIEVERS IN JESUS CHRIST

by

N. Serebrennikov

In the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The joyous anniversary of the millennium of Russian Christianity draws close. On the feast of the Annunciation I petitioned Patriarch Pimen to proclaim one thousand days of prayer for those incarcerated for their faith, and appealed to Communist leader M.S. Gorbachev to declare amnesty for those victimized for their faith. I received no reply from either. I doubt that a letter I sent to UNESCO suggesting that 1988 be proclaimed the Year of the Russian Church ever reached its destination.

Therefore I appeal to you, leaders of Orthodox churches and communities, for you have been given much that enables you, better than anyone else, to understand our feelings and hopes. May the Lord strengthen you for the forthcoming Ecumenical Council.

I make a special appeal to you, Your Holiness Pope John Paul II, for you are not only Pope, but also a Slav: extend your hand to us. In the name of Russia's heavenly protector, Saint Nicholas, the transfer of whose holy relics to Italy is marked by the Russian Church, I call for your assistance, for we are all responsible for how our children shall approach the year 2054, the thousandth anniversary of the Great Schism.

I also appeal to the leaders of Protestant churches and communities, for the Church is one, and our anniversary is yours as well. May the Holy Spirit be in your midst.

I call upon all churches and communities who profess the Nicene Creed: may the Lord preserve you.

I appeal to the leaders of religious societies, "let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works..." (Matthew 5:16)

I appeal to all those who confess Jesus Christ to support in prayer those who are suffering for the faith and to raise their souls through action, that the hand holding the Cup shall not falter.

I appeal to all people of good conscience.

After His baptism, Our Lord noted the 40 years of His people's wandering in the wilderness with a 40 day fast as an example to us all. Let us, in the year 1988, bend our knee to acknowledge the plight of the persecuted and pray to the Lord on their behalf - let us commence a thousand days of prayer, drawing strength through the icon of the Kazan Mother of God.

Let us recall whence we came and ponder where we are going. Let us remember that the Church of St. John, the most beloved of Christ's disciples, brought about the greatest event in the history of our country, giving rise to the Russian, Ukrainian and Byelorussian unity in faith until recent times. It is true our common home is the Kingdom of God, where "there is neither Jew nor Hellene" (Romans 10:12), but it is equally true that the mother's milk on which we were reared is Russian culture, which arose out of Orthodoxy.

Let us remember this and not lose sight of our beginnings. If we make no move, if we say no word in support of the persecuted and do nothing to defend our faith against the evil proliferating in the world, how shall we greet the joyous millennium of the coming of Christianity to Russia?

It is imperative to demand that the Soviet authorities amnesty prisoners of conscience; It is imperative to call upon the church hierarchy to proclaim a thousand days of prayer for the unification with imprisoned faithful and with each other.

Peace to you all, Our Lord be with you.

SEREBRENNIKOV Nicolai Valentinovich

Hospitalized July 1986

Personal data: Born in 1954, in 1973-74 was forcibly interned in a psychiatric hospital for attempted defection and an attempted crossing of the Soviet border. By profession I am an historian, specializing in Russian religious philosophy of the 19th century.

Partial List of Imprisoned Russian Orthodox Christians

Monk Savva Kolchugin - Forced Psychiatric Hospital
 Rev. Josif Safronov
 Rev. Nikolai Gershkanov - Forced Psychiatric Hospital
 Rev. Vladimir Solovyov - Forced Psychiatric Hospital
 Rev. Nikolai Gelerbayer
 Rev. Josif Michailov - Forced Psychiatric Hospital
 Deacon Vladimir Rusak
 Leonid Borodin - Christian Writer
 Yuri Fyodorov
 Zoya Krakhmalnikova - Christian Editor of Magazine
 "Nadeshda", (Hope).
 Felix Svetov
 Tatyana Velikanova

April 30, 1987

"My time is my life. In giving a part of my time to someone, I give a part of my life."

APPENDIX E



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Letter From Moscow

The year 1988 will mark the millennium of the Christianization of Russia. For the Russian Orthodox Church and for all Russian Christians this will be an event of the greatest significance and preparations are now being made for its celebration. Unfortunately, however, the joy of expectation of this glorious holiday is clouded by the knowledge of the tragic plight of Christians in the Soviet Union. There is nothing unusual about this in a country where atheism is one of the weapons of government policy, where the Church is separated from the state and the school from the Church.

Immediately after October 1917, persecution of Christianity began in Russia. Everyone knows about the mass closure of churches, desecration of places of worship, repressions against the church clergy, of the "5-Year Plan of godlessness" and the forcible implantation of atheism in schools, while all religious propaganda was strictly forbidden. Despite the seeming independence of the Russian Orthodox Church and the constitutionally guaranteed freedom of conscience, this persecution continues.

And in our times there are catastrophically few churches in the USSR, and it is extremely difficult to win permission for the opening of new parishes.

And in our times religious literature for a wide circle of readers is not being published at all: the Bible and the Gospels have been published several times in negligible quantities while the demand for these publications by the Orthodox Church has been enormous. Moreover, the dissemination of religious literature is a crime punishable by law.

And in our times serious difficulties exist in the religious upbringing of children, since not only do the authorities forbid religious education in state schools, but also the organization of children's and youth gatherings and circles within the religious communities themselves is strictly forbidden.

And in our times members of the clergy and many believers, like criminals, languish in prisons, exile and psychiatric hospitals, punished only for leading an active religious life. At the moment of this writing, among the imprisoned are: Fr. Gleb Yakunin, exiled in Yakutia after serving 5 years in labor camp, Fr. Iosif Sofronov, an 80-year-old (!) priest, founder of the Christian Committee for Defense of Believers' Rights, sentenced to 3 years in labor camp; Orthodox deacon Fr. Vladimir Russak, who wrote the history of the Russian Church after

1917—he was sentenced to 12 years of imprisonment; Christian writers Leonid Borodin, sentenced to 10 years of special regime camp to be followed by 5 years in exile, and Felix Svetov, who lives in exile; compiler of the religious journal "Nadezhda" ("Hope") Zoya Krakhmal'nikova, exiled to Siberia; religious activists Valery Senderov (12 years' imprisonment) and Elena Sannikova, serving her sentence in exile; Mikhail Bombin, sentenced to two years in labor camp for having in his possession a copy of "Vestnik RKhD" ("Herald of the Russian Christian Movement" published in France), Ignati Lapkin—2.5 years of labor camp, Nikolai Serebrennikov, thrown into a psychiatric hospital for his appeal to liberate imprisoned believers on the occasion of the millennium of the Christianization of Russia. And this list, unfortunately, is far from complete.

But despite this, Christianity in the Soviet Union has not perished, but in the last years has gained momentum and is spreading throughout the land at a greater rate, especially among young people.

On the eve of the 1000-year jubilee, we appeal to all religious and social organizations for help, we appeal to all people who consider freedom of religion to be the inalienable right of every individual. We ask that every means be used, including a special recognition by the United Nations of 1988 as the jubilee year of the Russian Orthodox Church, to draw attention of the world public to the situation of believers in the USSR in order to influence the Soviet authorities to grant complete freedom of religious life in the Soviet Union.

Natalia Golovanova
Yevgeni Pashnin
Olga Korzinina
Vladimir Golovanov
Assia Lashchiver
Vladimir Ryabokon
Tatiana Pletneva
Pavel Slavin-Borovsky
Fedor Finkel
Lilia Finkel
Svetlana Mayamnikova
Alexander Rubchenko